

How learning facilitators teach adults with  
mild and moderate intellectual disability  
in learnership programmes at post-school  
institutions in Cape Town:  
A descriptive qualitative study

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## DECLARATION

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Adults with intellectual disability (ID) have a right to be included in post-school education (PSE) opportunities such as learnership programmes. They face many barriers, however, including the fact that learning facilitators do not know how to include and teach these learners with ID in a PSE context. **Problem:** No literature or documented evidence has been captured about inclusive educational approaches describing how learning facilitators taught adults with ID in three learnership programmes that can be used to develop training programmes that will equip learning facilitators with the necessary skills for teaching this group of learners. **Rationale:** Learning facilitators need to be adequately trained, equipped and supported to meet specific learning needs of adults with ID in learnerships. This study will provide a resource of practice-based educational strategies that could serve as the basis for this training. **Aim:** To describe how learning facilitators in learnership programmes at Organisation X provided teaching to adults with ID. **Method:** An in-depth, moderately structured, open-ended interview method was used to collect data from six participants. Three Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and related guidelines were used to inform how the interview questions were structured. **Findings:** The main theme was “a learnership takes time, patience and many adjustments but it has to be done” that comprised three categories: namely “dealing with intellectual disability”, “streamlining learnership strategies” and “perceiving the ‘just right’ learnership”. The sub-categories identified were populated into the UDL Framework. **Discussion:** Learnership programmes with adults with ID are time consuming and personally demanding for learning facilitators, but adults with ID have a right to access these programmes. Training programmes for learning facilitators need to include aspects of how to deal with learners with ID, what curriculum differentiation strategies need to be streamlined, and how to create the ‘just right’ learnership. **Conclusions:** Learning facilitators believe that learners with ID have the right to access PSE and participate in learnerships. The success of post-school learnerships lies in providing the “just right” curriculum that offers support for both educator and learner. **Key Words:** Learning facilitators; intellectual disability (ID); universal design for learning (UDL); learnership programmes; inclusion; curriculum differentiation; post-school education (PSE).

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

*Attitude:* “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993:1).

*Barriers to learning:* “difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, the learning site and/or within the learner him/herself which prevent access to learning and development” (Department of Education, 2014: vii).

*Curriculum:* “ ‘formal’ curriculum consists of the courses, lessons, and learning activities students participate in, as well as the knowledge and skills educators intentionally teach to students, the hidden curriculum consists of the unspoken or implicit academic, social, and cultural messages that are communicated to students while they are in school” (Hidden Curriculum, 2014:1).

*Differentiation:* “processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum.” (Department of Basic Education, 2014: viii). For the purposes of this study, curriculum differentiation will not include changing the curriculum content as the learnership curriculum is pre-determined by the relevant Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA).

*Educator:* “any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment under this Act” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2006: 74).

*Inclusive Education and Training:* an approach to education and training that acknowledges “that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support; enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners; acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases; broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures; changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners; maximising

the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning” (Department Education, 2001:6).

*Intellectual Disability:* “characterized by deficits in general mental abilities, such as reasoning, problem solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and learning from experience. The deficits result in impairments of adaptive functioning, such that the individual fails to meet standards of personal independence and social responsibility in one or more aspects of daily life, including communication, social participation, academic or occupational functioning, and personal independence at home or in community settings.” (5<sup>th</sup> ed., Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – –5, American Psychiatric Association, 2013:31).

*Job Coach:* “a person who provides individualised, one-on-one assistance to the individual who is placed in an organisation. The job coach could, for example, as an option provide on the job training, assist with travel arrangements, skills training at the job site, ongoing assessments and evaluation and long-term support.” (Department of Labour, 2003:24). Job coaches can also support learners with disabilities who participate in learnership programmes.

*Learning Facilitators:* job coaches and lecturers who were responsible for training the adults with intellectual disability in the learnership programmes that were managed by the researcher’s employer organisation.

*Learnership Programme:* a contract between a learner, employer and an accredited skills development provider for a specified period of time leading to acquisition of national qualifications and/or credits towards national qualifications (Department of Labour, 2008).

*Lecturer:* any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services at any Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any lecturer establishment under the Further Education and Training Act No. 16 of 2006 (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2006: 8).

*Post-School Education:* “education for people who have left school as well as for those adults who have never been to school but require education opportunities.” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012: 1).

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
ID	Intellectual Disability
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NDS	National Skills Development Strategy
PIVOTAL	Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning
PSE	Post-School Education
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
WPPSET	White Paper on Post-School Education and Training
WPRPD	White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTIONS

### 1.1 Introduction to the study

Higher levels of education are critical in the pathway to employment for all citizens of working age, including those with mild and moderate intellectual disability (ID) (Western Cape Government, 2015). The National Development Plan 2030 presents “a long-term strategy to increase employment and broaden opportunities through education, vocational training and work experience, public employment programmes, health and nutrition, public transport and access to information” (Department of the Presidency, 2012: 28). Similarly, the Western Cape Provincial Strategic Plan 2014–2019, which is aligned to the National Development Plan 2030, aims to provide better education and economic growth for citizens in the Western Cape. Its second strategic goal is to improve education outcomes and opportunities for youth development. For the education and training system, this goal indicates a need to expand access to post-school education (PSE) opportunities beyond what is currently available to youth with ID. Expanding access, however, means that more needs to be known about ways of improving education success for persons whose learning is challenged by ID; hence the focus of this study.

Inclusive PSE refers to an approach to education and training that acknowledges that all youth and adults can learn and need support. According to the Department of Education (2001: 6–7), enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners means “acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases”. Inclusive PSE is broader than formal schooling and acknowledges that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures (Department of Education, 2001). It aims to “change attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners; maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimising barriers to learning” (Department of Education, 2001: 7).

Intellectual disability (ID) is a condition characterised by deficits in general mental abilities, for example reasoning and academic learning, resulting in impairments of adaptive functioning such that the individual does not meet norms and standards of personal independence and social responsibility in one or more aspects of daily life, including communication, social participation, academic or occupational functioning, and personal

independence at home or in community settings (APA, 2013: 13). There are four levels of severity of ID: mild, moderate, severe and profound. These levels are defined on the basis of the adaptive functioning of the individual that determines the level of supports required by that person, including curriculum differentiation in learning environments that prepare learners with mild and moderate ID for the world of work.

Curriculum differentiation refers to the processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2014: viii). To date there is limited research in South Africa into curriculum differentiation in learnerships for persons with mild to moderate ID to prepare them for adaptive functioning in the work place. This study therefore sets out to investigate how learning facilitators teach adults with mild and moderate ID in learnership programmes at post-school institutions in Cape Town. A learnership programme refers to a contract between a learner, employer and an accredited skills development provider for a specified period of time leading to acquisition of national qualifications and/or credits towards national qualifications (Department of Labour, 2008). Learning facilitators are job coaches and lecturers who are responsible for training adults with ID enrolled in a learnership programme.

Youth with ID in South Africa face many barriers to accessing PSE and training, and are therefore excluded from participating in the employment market on an equal basis with others. Exclusion due to lack of PSE limits their ability to fulfil a meaningful role in society. Accessing quality PSE, on the other hand, will assist them in personal development suited to competitive engagement with employment opportunities. In order for persons with ID to gain access to quality PSE towards employment and lifelong learning opportunities, the many barriers to learning they face in PSE learning environments need to be addressed through effective inclusive policy development and implementation. Knowing more about PSE learning environments and curriculum from the perspective of learning facilitators will therefore advance our understanding of these barriers and how to overcome them in order to include persons with ID.

While policies that address inclusive PSE such as the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPSET) (2013) and the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (WPRPD) (2015) outline the challenges relating to inclusion for persons with disabilities, they do not outline the specific adaptations, accommodations or modifications to the learning and teaching environment that are necessary to make inclusive learning



happen. In particular, there is limited literature describing how skilled learning facilitators go about providing appropriate training suitable for learners with ID, especially within PSE. This thesis addresses the identified gap in the literature. It describes how six learning facilitators teach adults with mild and moderate ID in three learnership programmes that were hosted by a non-government organisation (hereto referred as “Organisation X”) in partnership with three post-school institutions in Cape Town. This thesis identifies and describes the adaptations, accommodations and modifications they make in order to enable inclusive PSE to happen, thereby contributing towards closing this identified gap in the literature.

## **1.2 Rationale for study**

### **1.2.1 Disability rights to access post-school education in South Africa**

The South African WPRPD (2015) is a policy document “intended to accelerate transformation and redress with regard to full inclusion, integration and equality for persons with disabilities” and domesticates the UN (United Nations) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) in the South African legal and policy frameworks (Department of Social Development, 2015: 7). The WPRPD 2015 acknowledges that persons with disabilities have the right to access inclusive learning opportunities throughout their lives in barrier-free settings alongside peers without disabilities (Department of Social Development, 2015). Persons with disabilities need to be “able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others” (Department of Social Development, 2015: 84). Accessing these rights will empower persons with disabilities to benefit from education, skills development and employment opportunities that will enable them to participate effectively and inclusively in society. Little research has been done to date, however, on the accessibility of skills development programmes such as learnerships to learners with ID.

The South African WPPSET (2013) acknowledges the issues relating to appropriate and inclusive PSE and training for persons with disabilities (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). It also highlights the need to address disability in order to ensure that all adults with disabilities are integrated in all aspects of university or college life (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013), but reveals that the levels of commitment towards people with disability vary between post-school institutions (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). TVET colleges lack the capacity or even the policies to

provide training and education services for students and staff with disabilities (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). The WPPSET 2013 states that “the management of disability in post-school education remains fragmented and separate to that of existing transformation and diversity programmes at the institutional level” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013: 45). The perspectives of learning facilitators of persons of ID will therefore provide valuable insights to draw from when planning for inclusion within post-school education settings.

There are currently very limited opportunities in South Africa available for learners with ID after they exit the special school system. Learners with ID who attend a special school do not receive a certificate from their school that would position them within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in terms of learning and skills development. The skills that they do gain are therefore unacknowledged as they are not accredited on the NQF. This certification gap makes it challenging for them to meet admission criteria to post-school institutions.

For those few youth with ID who do access post-school institutions, there are very few accredited qualifications or skills-based programmes offered at a suitable level of understanding, with appropriate teaching methods and materials to suit their special educational needs. A more integrated approach to adapting teaching and learning methodologies within a qualification framework that accredits adapted programmes and approaches is necessary.

Learning facilitators in South African post-school institutions need to have a greater awareness of the needs of students and staff with disabilities and they need capacity in order to address disability inclusion (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). Learning facilitators need to be adequately trained, equipped and supported to meet the specific learning needs. Although many of the learning facilitators in the Organisation X learnerships have acquired informal educational competencies over many years of working with persons with ID, no literature or documented evidence exists that describes how they went about providing teaching to people with mild and moderate ID in post-school institutions.

Investigating the knowledge and skills of these post-school learning facilitators, as well as the challenges they faced to determine their support needs, will provide a rich resource of practice-based educational strategies that could serve as the basis for the development of a formal curriculum for learning facilitators in post-school education of persons with ID.

### 1.2.2 Making learnerships relevant to learners with intellectual disability

The post-1994 South African government introduced a number of new policies, for example the Skills Development Act (1997), Skills Levies Act (1998a) and White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (1996), to redress the structural racial inequalities that existed during the Apartheid political dispensation in South Africa including limited and under-resourced provision of training and skills development for the general population including persons with disabilities (Groener, 2013). Through the Skills Levies Act (1998a), the government sourced funding through skills levies imposed on almost all employers (Department of Labour, 1999). These levy payments are directed into the National Skills Funds where the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA), represented by members from organised labour, organised employers, relevant government departments, interested professional bodies, and bargaining councils in the sector (Department of Labour, 1998), then distributes these funds for skills development programmes such as learnerships and skills programmes for designated groups, including persons with disabilities (Groener, 2013).

“Learnerships are professional and vocational education and training programmes that combine theory and practice and culminate in a qualification that is registered on the National Qualification Framework” and were “established to address the decline in levels of employment in South Africa; the unequal distribution of income; unequal access to education, training and employment opportunities; the effects of race, gender and geographical location on advancement; and the skills shortage among the labour force, including persons with disabilities “ (Department of Social Development, 2015:11). SETAs promote learnerships by sourcing workplaces for practical work experience, assist in the development of learning materials, improve and monitor the quality of training rendered in their various sectors and assist in the conclusion of learnership agreements (Department of Labour, 1998).

According to the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) III 2011–2013 Progress Report, SETAs must ensure that 80% of the Discretionary Grant (grants paid out on the discretion of a SETA as opposed to by mandate) are ring-fenced for the Professional, Vocational, Technical and Academic Learning (PIVOTAL) grant programmes, which include learnerships (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). Learnerships may be established if they: a) include structured learning components; b) provide structured work experience of a specified nature and duration; c) could lead to a SAQA-registered

qualification; and d) are correctly registered in the prescribed way (Department of Labour, 2008).

One of the NSDS III transformational imperatives includes giving priority towards “significantly opening up opportunities for skills training for people experiencing barriers to employment caused by various forms of physical and intellectual disability” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:21). It is reported that between 2011/2012 and 2012/2013, 66 289 learners (employed and unemployed) went through learnerships (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013), although there are no statistics regarding how many of the learners in these learnerships had ID. It is therefore important that we understand how these learnerships at Organisation X, in partnership with various PSE institutions, were taught to this population of learners to facilitate more effective inclusion in future.

### 1.3 Context of the research

The researcher is employed as an Occupational Therapist at Organisation X that provides services to people with ID in the Western Cape. As part of their services, Organisation X enrolled one hundred and twenty adults with ID in three SETA learnerships in partnership with post-school institutions. The NQF “overarches the whole education and training system in South Africa” and “is organised as a series of levels of learning achievement, arranged in ascending order from one to ten” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013: 69). The learnership programmes under investigation were registered at NQF levels 1 and 2. Only these learners with ID from Organisation X were learners in these three learnerships.

Each learnership programme was for a twelve-month period involving three separate qualifications as indicated below. Each of these qualifications involved the teaching and assessment of learner competency in the core components of each specific qualification, the main subject matter, as well as fundamental components, namely, numeracy and literacy.

Fifty learners with ID were enrolled in the Hygiene and Cleaning learnership (qualification number 57937, NQF level 1, 120 credits) in 2012 that was facilitated by two learning facilitators from the post-school institution. A further thirty learners with ID were enrolled in the Business Administration learnership (qualification number 23833, NQF level 2, 130 credits) in 2012 and was facilitated by one learning facilitator at the post-school institution.

However, eighteen of these learners with ID from the Business Administration learnership transferred over to the Hygiene and Cleaning learnership as they were experiencing difficulty engaging the level two training, as this required levels of skill and abilities that the learners with ID did not have, specifically in numeracy and literacy. Twenty more learners with ID were enrolled in the General Education and Training Certificate: Clothing Manufacturing Processes learnership (qualification number 50584, NQF level 1, 120 credits) in 2014, facilitated by one learning facilitator at the post-school institution. The outcome of these three learnerships in terms of number of learners who achieved a full qualification, the number who achieved partial credits and the number of those who de-enrolled are reported in Table 1 below:

**Table 1 – Organisation X Learnership Outcomes**

<b>Learnership</b>	<b>Achieved full learnership qualification</b>	<b>Completed learnership with partial credits</b>	<b>De-enrolled</b>
<b>Hygiene and Cleaning</b>	18	49	1
<b>Business Administration</b>	11	1	0
<b>Clothing Manufacturing Processes</b>	0	19	1

Based on the outcomes of these three learnerships, as well as on their goal to improve educational and employment opportunities, Organisation X is embarking on the development of a post-school bridging programme for adults with mild and moderate ID. This post-school bridging programme will consist of a variety of NQF level 1 accredited skills training modules that will be occupationally-based with credits that can be gained towards a qualification on the NQF (Skills Development Act, 1999). The post-school bridging programme offered by Organisation X will prepare adults with ID to gain qualifications in post-school institutions or for employment opportunities in the Open Labour Market (OLM) should they choose to do so.

As part of the development of this bridging programme, the learning facilitators will need to be trained on how to facilitate accreditation-based curricula, administer the required formal assessments, as well as navigate various challenges related to the inclusion of adults with ID in post-school settings. The researcher is responsible for developing a training programme for learning facilitators that will be running the bridging programme. The researcher is therefore conducting this study to find out how learning facilitators who were involved in teaching adults with ID in the three SETA learnership programmes provided the

teaching and overcame challenges. The findings will inform the content of the training programme for learning facilitators.

Even though the lecturers at the post-school institutions where the learnerships were based have not had any formal training themselves in inclusive education of adults with ID, they had nevertheless gained knowledge and a skill set in the curriculum and implementation of post-school learnerships and programmes. Organisation X made available a job coach for each of the learnerships to assist in accommodating educational needs and addressing barriers to learning. The job coach met with the lecturer on a regular basis to advise and plan the most appropriate teaching and assessment methods to accommodate the learner's needs as was indicated. The job coaches also spent time in the classrooms with the learners during the teaching.

Much can be learnt from these lecturers and job coaches, jointly referred to as "learning facilitators", about the learning needs of adults with ID during post-school learnerships as well as challenges they faced, perspectives they had of teaching adults with ID in learnership programmes and inclusive educational strategies (teaching and assessment methods) they used.

Youth and adults with ID are not included in PSE settings due to attitudinal, structural and learning barriers that render these institutions inaccessible to this population group. They therefore experience more challenges in finding employment as they do not have the required skills and knowledge or, where they do have skills, these are not acknowledged by any certification that would allow them to progress through the NQF. It is also a disability rights imperative that these settings be accessible in terms of the teaching and curriculum provided as well as the attitudes portrayed in order for adults with ID to have an equal opportunity for participation. The educational competencies of learning facilitators in managing the learning and teaching needs of adults with ID in post-school settings are critical for the attainment of inclusion. No formal training currently exists in South Africa that equips post-school learning facilitators with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for teaching learners with ID in post-school institutions. Gathering information about how learning facilitators taught these learnerships and understanding what challenges they faced is therefore critical for the advancement and development of successful inclusion-focused training programmes for learning facilitators.

## **1.4 Problem statement**

In order for Organisation X to teach learning facilitators on how to differentiate curriculum for adults with ID in learnerships and provide them with the necessary support during learnerships, they need to identify and describe how the teaching is taking place and what challenges are being experienced by the learning facilitators. There is no documented evidence arising from the three Organisation X learnerships regarding the challenges that were faced and the strategies that were used to teach persons with ID. No information about inclusive educational approaches has been captured to date that can be used to develop training programmes that will equip learning facilitators with the necessary skills for teaching persons with ID.

## **1.5 Research purpose**

The study will provide information regarding the challenges experienced by learning facilitators within post-school institutions during 3 Organisation X learnerships with adults with mild and moderate ID, their perspectives about providing this training, and the curriculum differentiation strategies that they used. The purpose of gathering this information is to contribute to the training of future learning facilitators on how to teach learners with ID and providing these learning facilitators with support during the implementation of learnerships.

## **1.6 Research question**

The research question is as follows:

How do learning facilitators in learnership programmes at Organisation X provide teaching to adults with mild and moderate ID?

## **1.7 Research aim**

The research aim is to describe how learning facilitators in learnership programmes at Organisation X provided teaching to adults with mild and moderate ID.

## **1.8 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are to identify and describe the following:

1. The perspectives of learning facilitators about people with ID in learnership programmes;

2. The challenges faced by learning facilitators when teaching adults with ID during learnerships;
3. The curriculum differentiation strategies used to provide the teaching; and
4. The learning facilitator's support needs during learnerships.

## 1.9 Summary

This chapter has provided a brief background to and rationale for the study. Reference has been made to international and national policies regarding the rights of persons with disabilities to PSE. The barriers to PSE for adults with ID were briefly discussed, including the need for learning facilitators in PSE institutions to understand disability and how to include people with ID in their classrooms. Learnerships offer one opportunity for learners with ID to access PSE. Post-school learning facilitators that have already navigated the learnership process with learners with ID can provide much-needed insights into practice-based educational strategies that could inform the curriculum used to train learning facilitators on inclusion in a post-school setting. The next chapter will review literature relevant to the study, specifically the perspectives of learning facilitators towards disability, the curriculum differentiation strategies they use in PSE when working with people with ID, the challenges they face, and the support they need. Chapter three provides the rationale for the study methodology and methods, sampling and participants, the processes followed in collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data, and the principles used to ensure ethical research standards were maintained. Chapter four will present the findings of the research that include the theme, three categories and twelve subcategories. Chapter five will discuss each aspect of the main theme as well as training-related focus areas for learning facilitators in relation to the literature, and chapter six will outline the recommendations before commenting on the study limitations and making a final conclusion about the research question.



## **CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature review commences by describing the prevalence of ID in South Africa. It then introduces pertinent inclusive education policies and frameworks in South Africa that support access to PSE for persons with disabilities. No literature was found detailing how learning facilitators in PSE settings in South Africa provide training to adults with mild and moderate ID in learnership programmes. Similarly, there is very limited research in South Africa regarding how learning facilitators provide accredited training to adults with ID in PSE settings. It is therefore necessary to draw from literature in similar settings, both locally and internationally, for example educators working in mainstream schools adopting inclusive education practices for children with disabilities, as well as learning facilitators working in post-school settings including youth and adults with disabilities, in order to gain insights. Drawing from this literature, attitudes and perspectives of teachers and learning facilitators are explored, as well as curriculum differentiation strategies and challenges they experience in inclusive education settings. The chapter concludes by examining the support needs of learning facilitators when providing inclusive education.

### **2.2 Prevalence of ID in South Africa**

It is unclear exactly what the prevalence of ID is in South Africa. Different studies have revealed different results due to different study methodologies used. Kleintjies et al. (2006) determined the annual prevalence of ID in the Western Cape Province in South Africa across three categories based on Intelligence Quotient (IQ) scores: namely below 70 (mild ID), below 50 (moderate ID) and below 30 (severe and profound ID). The annual prevalence of ID in adults, children and adolescents with an IQ of below 70 was 2.5%, 0.4% for people with an IQ of below 50, and 0.1% for people with an IQ of below 30. The Statistics South Africa census of 2001 (Statistics South Africa, 2005) reported a 5% prevalence of disability in the South African population, with the prevalence of ID representing 12% of this 5% (approximately 0.6%). Christianson et al. (2002: 179) reportedly represented the first data on the prevalence of ID and associated disabilities in rural South African children and revealed a “minimum observed prevalence of 35.6 per 1000 children in this population” (thus 3.56%). It can be concluded that the prevalence of ID is higher in rural communities.

Recent and relevant statistics since 2006 on the prevalence of ID in South Africa have not been determined (Statistics South Africa, 2012). The 2011 South African Census data did not indicate any figures for ID specifically, making it challenging to determine the current prevalence in the school leavers and adult South Africa populations. The 2011 South African Census did reveal that the “majority of persons aged 20–24 years with severe difficulties across all functional domains were not attending any tertiary institution. Tertiary level education includes all post-school qualifications.” (Statistics South Africa, 2014: xii). Youth with ID are not currently accessing PSE due to many barriers preventing their access.

According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013: 45) “accurate and up-to-date data on the number of post-school students with disabilities is not available. It is essential to achieve a fuller understanding of the number of persons with disabilities, and the types of disabilities of people within the post-school system.” Similarly, “the Departments of Education (Basic and Higher) have been gathering data on various education and skills development interventions in South Africa, including Learnerships. However, data obtained is thin and seldom disaggregated by disability.” (Department of Social Development, 2015:15). It is therefore difficult to provide corresponding services and to identify environmental accommodations that should be in place for post-school systems to enable full participation and inclusion.

Despite the limited recent information regarding the prevalence of ID in South Africa, the statistics in Kleintjies et al. (2006) and the findings from the 2011 Census regarding tertiary level education for persons with severe disabilities clearly indicate a need for educational services that may have grown over recent years. The provision of these educational services needs to be addressed within the policy frameworks of South Africa in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are participating as equal citizens and included in society.

## **2.3 Inclusive Education Policies and Frameworks**

### **2.3.1 Inclusive Education Policies**

According to the WPPSET, post-school institutions need to address disability in order to ensure that all adults with disabilities are integrated in all aspects of university or college life (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). Educators in post-school institutions need to have a greater awareness of the needs of students and staff with

disabilities and they need the capacity to provide reasonable educational accommodations for learners with special needs in order to address disability in the classroom (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). The WPPSET (2013) acknowledges that there are challenges in inclusive PSE and training that need investigation, including the appropriateness of PSE and training for persons with disabilities as well as “the facilities and support services available to students and staff with disabilities in relation to individual requirements.” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:45). TVET colleges lack the capacity or even the policies to cater for students and staff with disabilities (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013).

According to the WPRPD (2015), focus areas for inclusive education include the provision of reasonable accommodation of the individual learning requirements (for example, extra time for examinations and written submissions); provision of support to persons with disabilities within the general education system to facilitate effective education; provision of effective individualised support measures in environments that maximise academic and social development (for example, facilitating peer support and mentoring); and enabling persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills (Department of Social Development, 2015). The UNCRPD (2006) stipulates that State parties need to take appropriate measures to facilitate the learning through use of augmentative and alternative modes of teaching including differentiated means and formats of communication and orientation in order to “enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community” (United Nations, 2017: 17). By investigating the educational challenges and strategies of learning facilitators, the current study aims to inform the development of curriculum used to train learning facilitators in how to include adults with ID in PSE.

### **2.3.2 Inclusive Education Frameworks**

There is a need in the education system for frameworks to be developed and adopted that will empower educators and learning facilitators with skills and knowledge on how to accommodate a diverse set of learner needs (Dalton, McKenzie and Kahonde, 2012). One framework that could be used is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which is focused on reducing barriers for learners regarding the curriculum design and delivery (Dalton et al., 2012). This framework is a “new model that can be used for designing all aspects of the

learning environment to address the wide-ranging variation of student needs that exist in an inclusive education system.” (Dalton et al., 2012: 7).

UDL is based on three principles: providing multiple means of representation (the means by which information is presented to the learner), providing multiple means of action and expression (the means by which the learner is required to demonstrate what they know); and providing multiple means of engagement (the means by which students are engaged in learning and stay motivated) (Rose & Gravel, n. d.). “These principles were chosen as they address the critical features of any teaching and learning environment” (Rose & Gravel, n.d.: 3). The UDL therefore ensures that the widest range of learning needs are taken into account from the start, instead of adapting materials and the environment at a later stage. The researcher used these three UDL principles and related guidelines to inform how the interview questions are structured (see Chapter three).

## **2.4 Attitudes and perspectives of lecturers towards inclusion**

Inclusion is complex and requires more than just a shift in one form of service provision to another, but rather a “deeper transformation in areas such as beliefs and values” (Ntombela, 2011: 7). The success of inclusive education depends on a number of different factors, including the attitudes of teachers in mainstream schools towards disability and inclusion (Muwana & Ostrosky, 2014; Memisevic & Hodzic, 2011; Thaver & Lim, 2014; Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015). The implementation of a new inclusive education system may result in different demands and will need to be carefully planned, and monitored to ensure it is appropriately implemented (Ntombela, 2011). Teachers may experience reluctance to change from how they are currently providing education, and will need professional development that will focus on equipping them with appropriate attitudes, knowledge, skills and values to perform well within an inclusive environment (Ntombela, 2011).

Attitudinal barriers are the most difficult barriers to eradicate for students with disabilities in post-school settings (Diez, Lopez & Molina, 2015). The performance of students with disabilities is linked to the attitudes of lecturers and staff (Diez, et al., 2015; Hsieh, Hsieh, Ostrosky & McCollum, 2012). It is therefore critical to understand the attitudes and perspectives of learning facilitators towards inclusion, as this factor is an important one in supporting their role as learning facilitators in the classroom. The current study contributes to the literature about the perspectives of learning facilitators regarding the inclusion of persons with disabilities in PSE.

#### **2.4.1 Positive attitudes and perspectives towards inclusion**

Different attitudes and perspectives of learning facilitators towards the inclusion of adults with ID in post-school institutions exist internationally. O'Connor, Kubaik, Espiner and O'Brien (2012: 247) in their study on PSE for people with ID at Trinity College in Dublin explored, inter alia, the university lecturers' views on inclusive practices and challenges experienced. The findings showed that lecturers had positive interactions with the students with ID in their classes, gained a sense of personal satisfaction from having the students there, and desired to improve their instructional strategies to accommodate a variety of learning needs in their classes. It is important to note that their positive experience correlated positively with their desire to improve their instructional strategies in order for the learners to benefit maximally.

Abu-Hamour (2013) found that the majority of faculty members working across different disciplines in a large university in the southern region of Jordan had positive attitudes towards inclusion of students in higher education institutions, even though a majority of them were not trained to teach students with disabilities. Students that experienced positive attitudes from their educators reported that this contributed significantly to their academic success (Diez, et al., 2015).

#### **2.4.2 Negative attitudes and perspectives towards inclusion**

Conversely, a study in Botswana that documented the experiences of university students with disabilities in their struggle to access and participate in higher education revealed a prevalence in negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities where the lecturers were not ready to change their teaching approaches to accommodate special learning needs (Moswela & Mukhopadhyay, 2011). The resistance of educators to curriculum adaptations and modifications in the classroom had a significant impact on the learning and academic achievement of students with disabilities (Moswela & Mukhopadhyay, 2011). "The lack of academic progress that is evidenced by learners with disabilities may, in part, be caused by the teachers' own low expectations and goals for the learners, resulting in insufficient instruction." (Donohue & Bornman, 2015: 54).

Diez, et al. (2015) found that some lecturers saw curriculum adaptations for persons with disabilities as a form of favouritism and not of providing them with equal opportunities for learning, which means that the needs of these students went unmet, preventing them from accessing educational opportunities. When curricula adaptations were made by lecturers,

they were conceded on the basis of good will and not in compliance with university regulations and student rights provision (Diez, et al., 2015).

Attitudinal barriers from lecturers towards people with invisible disabilities (viz. no physical manifestation, for example psychosocial, mental and ID) versus people with visible disabilities (viz. that are seen, for example wheelchairs or white canes) have been found to be greater (Diez, et al., 2015). Diez et al. (2015) found that students with invisible disabilities had to demonstrate their disability to the lecturers and even bring supporting documentation to prove that they had a disability. Thaver and Lim (2014) found that pre-service mainstream teachers (student teachers) in Singapore were not favourable to including students with physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities or behavioural problems in mainstream settings. A majority of these teachers believed that students with disabilities are best served in special educational settings and should not be included in mainstream education (Thaver & Lim, 2014).

A South African-based study in the province of KwaZulu-Natal investigated teachers' experiences and understandings of the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education – Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001) policy within three primary schools (Ntombela, 2011). The teachers in this study “still viewed separate provision for learners who experience barriers to learning and development as a better option (including those with disabilities)” and “indicated an absence of a shift in their understanding of teaching and learning.” (Ntombela, 2011: 12). They perceive children with disabilities as outsiders who need to be taught separately and therefore do not consider how their teaching and classroom organisation could be the cause of the barrier to learners that these children face (Ntombela, 2011).

## **2.5 Curriculum differentiation strategies in inclusive education**

Curriculum is an essential component when working with students with ID (Shurr & Bouck, 2013). Barriers to learning for adults with ID can arise from the interaction between the impairment and the environment, including the different aspects of the curriculum (Department of Education, 2001). These curriculum aspects include: the content of what is being taught; “the language or medium of instruction; how the classroom or lecture is organised and managed; the methods and processes used in teaching; the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum; the learning materials and equipment that is used; and how the learning is assessed.” (Department of Education, 2001:19). The

concept of curriculum differentiation, the Universal Design for Learning framework and support assessments are unpacked below.

### 2.5.1 Curriculum differentiation

Curriculum differentiation “involves processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies”, the content of the curriculum, the learning environment (Department of Basic Education, 2014: viii) and the learning activities in order for learners to learn successfully (Nel, Kempen and Ruscheinski, 2011). Differentiation of curriculum is an approach used to address diverse learning needs in a classroom (Nel, et al., 2011). There is a need to identify and overcome the barriers that cause learning difficulties for people with disability to enable them to participate actively and critically in the learning process (Department of Education, 2001). Curriculum is the most significant barrier to learning within the inclusive education system in SA (Nel et al., 2011).

Learners with ID have specific learning needs that need to be met in order for them to access PSE. One of their main needs is for the curriculum to be made more accessible. Adaptations made within curriculum differentiation strategies, which include accommodations and modifications, can take many forms, for example individualising learner goals, instructional strategies and providing more supports (Lee et al., 2006). Using practical, hands-on experiential learning activities, continuous interaction between educator and learner, breaking up lessons into manageable steps and using repetition, visual aids and stimulation, as well as verbalisation are useful strategies when educating people with ID (Nel, et al., 2011).

In the study by O'Connor et al. (2012), lecturers believed that they needed to accommodate multiple learning styles (for example, auditory, visual and kinesthetic) and use student-centred approaches to present materials. They made use of motivating PowerPoint presentations, visual imagery, question-and-answer sessions, small group discussions, and practical /interactive sessions (O'Connor, et al., 2012).

“All adaptations require adjustments in the structure and content of the educational program, as well as the level of curricular mastery expected of students.” (Kurth, 2013: 35). Adaptations can be general, used by many learners and address routine classroom activities (see UDL framework principles and guidelines in Table 1), or specific, applying to

particular learners and lessons/activities (for example, a worksheet adaptation for a learner based on their unique need) (Kurth, 2013).

### 2.5.2 Universal Design for Learning Framework

Based on the three UDL principles mentioned previously, the UDL framework recommends nine guidelines that can change the way educators educate, how learners learn, and the way that barriers to education for all learners can be removed (Dalton, et al., 2012). These guidelines “...articulate the specific practices that have been shown to be effective for one or specific types of learning or learners and that should be considered as important options to ensure that students with a full range of abilities and disabilities can access and progress in the general curriculum.” (Rose & Gravel, n.d.: 4).

The three UDL principles, their guidelines as well as the checkpoints associated with each of these guidelines are summarised in the table below (Rose & Gravel, n.d.; National Center on Universal Design for Learning, 2014):

**Table 2 – UDL Framework principles, guidelines and checkpoints**

<b><u>Principles</u></b> Provide multiple means of:	<b><u>Guidelines</u></b> Provide options for:	<b><u>Checkpoints</u></b> Provide options:
<b><u>Representation</u></b>	<b>Perception</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That customise the display of information</li> <li>2. That provide alternatives for auditory information</li> <li>3. That provide alternatives for visual information</li> </ol>
	<b>Language and symbols</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That define vocabulary and symbols</li> <li>2. That clarify syntax and structure</li> <li>3. That assist with decoding text or mathematical notation</li> <li>4. That promote cross-linguistic understanding</li> <li>5. That illustrate key concepts non linguistically</li> </ol>



	<b>Comprehension</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That provide or activate background knowledge</li> <li>2. That highlight critical features, big ideas and relationships</li> <li>3. That guide information processing</li> <li>4. That support memory and transfer</li> </ol>
<b><u>Action and expression</u></b>	<b>Physical action</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the mode of physical response</li> <li>2. In the means of navigation</li> <li>3. For accessing tools and assistive technology</li> </ol>
	<b>Expressive skills and fluency</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the media for communication</li> <li>2. In the tools for composition and problem solving</li> <li>3. In the scaffolds for practice and performance</li> </ol>
	<b>Executive functions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That guide effective goal-setting</li> <li>2. That support planning and strategy development</li> <li>3. That facilitate managing information and resources</li> <li>4. That enhance capacity for monitoring progress</li> </ol>
<b><u>Engagement</u></b>	<b>Recruiting interest</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That increase individual choice and autonomy</li> <li>2. That enhance relevance, value and authenticity</li> <li>3. That reduce threats and distractions</li> </ol>
	<b>Sustaining effort and persistence</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That enlighten salience of goals and objectives</li> <li>2. That vary levels of challenge and support</li> <li>3. That foster collaboration and communication</li> <li>4. That increase master-orientated feedback</li> </ol>
	<b>Self-regulation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That guide personal goal-setting and expectations</li> <li>2. That scaffold coping skills and strategies</li> <li>3. That develop self-assessment and reflection</li> </ol>

The advancement of digital media and technology over the years allows educators the flexibility to differentiate their approaches in a way that is not possible using traditional media such as print and speech for example (Meyer & Rose, 2005). Within these UDL principles and guidelines, the provision of customised multimedia content, even just digital text, can also be used to reduce barriers to learning (Meyer & Rose, 2005). Low technology options can also “achieve similar outcomes when implemented by using the three core UDL principles” (Dalton, et al., 2012: 6). The current study aims to establish if and how low- or high-technology was used in the learnerships by learning facilitators to teach adults with ID on accredited curriculum.

### 2.5.3 Support assessments

According to the APA (2013) there are four levels of severity of ID, namely mild, moderate, severe, and profound. These levels are differentiated on the basis of adaptive functioning (the age-appropriate behaviours necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life) that determine the level of supports required. Supports are resources and strategies necessary to promote the development, education, interests, and personal well-being of a person with ID (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities [AAIDD], 2008). The supports approach “evaluates the specific needs of the individual and then suggests strategies and services to optimize individual functioning.” (AAIDD, 2008: 3). The AAIDD assesses the severity of functional limitations of people with ID based on the intensity of support needed. These needs are assessed using standardised support needs instruments such as the Supports Intensity Scale developed by AAIDD in 2004 (AAIDD, 2008).

Similarly, in the South African school context, the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System policy (Department of Education, 2001) asserts that “in order to make inclusive education a reality, there needs to be a conceptual shift regarding the provision of support for learners who experience barriers to learning.” (Dalton, et al., 2012:2). The national Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) policy “specifically aims to identify (1) the barriers to learning experienced, (2) the support needs that arise from barriers experienced and (3) to develop the support programme that needs to be in place to address the impact of the barrier on the learning process” for learners in grade R to twelve (Department of Basic Education, 2014:4). In identifying the support needs of learners with disabilities, the SIAS policy is designed to assess the level and extent of support required in the school to

optimise the child's participation (Department of Basic Education, 2014). Specific support provision areas are identified in the SIAS policy, including "curriculum differentiation to meet the individual needs of learners" and "assistive devices, specialised equipment and teaching and learning support materials" (Department of Basic Education, 2014:8). To date, the SIAS provisions have not been translated for PSE contexts; hence the contribution of the current study to understand how curriculum differentiation needs to take place in PSE with adults with mild and moderate ID.

The outcomes of an assessment such as the Supports Intensity Scale, a policy such as SIAS for PSE, or other similar instruments / policies / strategies, may provide useful information for learning facilitators in post-school institutions to use in order to adapt the curriculum for the adults with ID in their classrooms.

There is a scarcity of research literature available on curriculum content for students with moderate and severe disabilities (Shurr & Bouck, 2013). There is therefore a need to identify various curriculum and classroom adaptations, modifications, accommodations as well as teaching strategies and methodologies that are being used in order to understand and inform curriculum development aimed at teaching adults with mild and moderate ID in a post-school institution. For this study, the focus did not include the development of the learnership programme curriculum as this is not at the discretion of the learning facilitators to change as it is prescribed by the SETAs, but rather how it was presented and assessed.

## **2.6 Challenges faced by learning facilitators when working in inclusive education**

There are many challenges that educators and learning facilitators face in the process of inclusion. "They are expected to be 'a solution' for any kind of situation that might come up in an inclusive classroom and be competent to respond to it efficiently" and to differentiate curricula to suit all students' needs (Memisevic & Hodzic, 2011: 706). These expectations cause them to feel stressed and inadequate to support learners with ID and that they will receive blame should the student not succeed (Memisevic & Hodzic, 2011). Appropriate support needs to be provided to learning facilitators to assist them in problem-solving these challenges and to share the responsibility of ensuring inclusive education is correctly implemented in PSE institutions.

Dotger (2011:416) in her study on becoming an inclusive science educator suggests that while there are services in higher education to "increase access for adults with disabilities,

these services alone cannot overcome the gestalt responses of faculty”. A gestalt response “indicates the dynamic and holistic unity of needs, feelings, values, meanings and behavioral inclinations triggered by an immediate situation” (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999: 9). Gestalt responses present a challenge to change and act as a barrier for the full participation of all learners in education settings, including those with a disability (Dotger, 2011). Learning facilitators are not trained in how to implement principles of universal design or learner-centred instruction that contributes to their gestalt responses towards people with a disability (Dotger, 2011). Awareness regarding disability and viewing learners with a disability as people first can change gestalt responses (Dotger, 2011).

Many educators have not been trained to teach learners with diverse learning needs (Nel et al., 2011). Educators “do not have adequate knowledge and skills to translate education policies and to adapt curriculum to support learners with barriers to learning” (Nel, et al., 2011: 192). The most common challenges faced by educators in inclusive educational settings relate to managing challenging behaviour of the children with disabilities and instructional challenges (Yeo, Chong, Neihart & Huan, 2014). Varied learner strengths and weaknesses, as well as the differences in their developmental levels, present a huge challenge for educators when planning, preparing and presenting lessons and creative teaching methods (Nel, et al., 2011). There is therefore a need to train educators and learning facilitators, “on how to make curriculum more accessible for learners with barriers to learning by working out a differentiated curriculum” (Nel, et al., 2011: 192).

Lack of support, access to information, consultation, recognition and acknowledgement are challenging for educators when including people with disability in higher education, leaving them feeling anxious, isolated and uncertain (Savvidou, 2011). In addition, a lack of teaching aids and equipment, as well as administrative and financial support from District offices, are also significant barriers to enable educators in South Africa to enact inclusive education in their classrooms within the school sector (Engelbrecht, et al., 2015). The current study contributes to the literature about the challenges of learning facilitators regarding the inclusion of persons with disabilities in PSE.

## **2.7 Support needs of learning facilitators when working in inclusive education**

The provision of support to teachers, for example adequate support staff and resources, appears to be a critical contributor towards inclusion (Donohue & Bornman, 2015). The lack of support available to teachers in South Africa (Nel et al., 2011) may be an important

contributor towards negative attitudes and perspectives that some teachers develop towards inclusive education (Donohue & Bornman, 2015). “If the South African Department of Education wants to make inclusion a reality, they need to provide schools and teachers with the appropriate supports to realise this policy.” (Donohue & Bornman, 2015: 56).

Donohue and Bornman (2015) found that teachers listed the following resources and supports to facilitate inclusion: assistive devices, instructional materials, computers, personal assistants, and extra training. Memisevic and Hodzic (2011) found in their study that teachers are willing to teach students with ID, but they do not have the necessary resources. They recommend the following be put in place to support teachers: a) reduce the number of learners in the classroom, b) provide assistance from special education teachers to individualise the curriculum for learners with ID, and c) to have more convenient didactic materials (Memisevic & Hodzic, 2011).

### **2.7.1 Training of educators and lecturers in disability and inclusion**

One of the most commonly mentioned barriers affecting students with disabilities in the study by Diez, et al. (2015) was that the faculty at the university lacked training on disability-related matters and the provision of adequate support to students. The authors recommended that universities incorporate specific training in working with students with disabilities into faculty training programmes to empower lecturers to respond effectively to their students’ needs (Diez, et al., 2015). Similarly, the study by Abu-Hamour (2013) revealed that faculty members with fewer years of experience had more positive attitudes to inclusion as they were more likely to have attended schools / universities that had just begun including courses on the disability inclusion movement. Abu-Hamour (2013) recommended that faculty members should be trained to teach and provide specific accommodations for students with disabilities. Likewise Memisevic and Hodzic (2011: 709) recommended that teachers need “additional trainings in topics such as individualisation and inclusion, autism and other genetic disorders, social skills training for children with intellectual disability, etc.” in order to become more confident in managing inclusion in their classrooms.

Teachers who engage with the social model of disability in their own education “seem to develop a value for disabled’s persons’ experiences and capacities, identify and perform critique of exclusionary school practices, and gain vitality and philosophy to understand inclusive education as a moral and ethical imperative.” (Baglieri, 2008). This conviction and

belief regarding inclusion needs to be strong enough to motivate them to fight for inclusion in settings that remain largely exclusive (Baglieri, 2008).

In a South African study exploring lecturers' distancing behaviour towards student with disabilities, Van Jaarsveldt and Ndeya-Ndereya (2015: 208) identified that "all lecturers were in need of information and support to promote inclusive practices on this campus". They found that self-reflective educational practice was essential in order for lecturers to address internal barriers and that professional development of lecturers should include opportunities for reflective discourse in an atmosphere of mutual respect (Van Jaarsveldt & Ndeya-Ndereya, 2015: 199).

### 2.7.2 The need for successful teaching experiences

Yeo et al. (2014) observed that as important as education is for educators, this is not what makes them feel competent to teach children with disabilities. They found that successful classroom experiences with children with disabilities are what influenced teachers' sense of efficacy and attitude towards inclusion. Similarly, Elshabrawy and Hassanein (2015) and Dessemontet, Morin and Crocker (2014) found that providing information to educators alone does not achieve lasting change of attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities, but rather that contact with disabled people is also required. Information-based training programmes, together with structured fieldwork experience or real contact with people with intellectual disabilities, result in a significant positive impact on teachers' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities (Elshabrawy & Hassanein, 2015). Elshabrawy and Hassanein (2015: 385) therefore suggest that training programmes for teachers "should have a practical experience of meaningful contact with people with disabilities, in addition to the theoretical components of the curriculum" and that "continued support, real contact experience, and technical assistance must be provided". Experiences of including children with ID in the classroom developed a better self-efficacy belief in teachers that increases their willingness to include them in the classroom (Dessemontet, et al., 2014).

The literature is clear that there is critical value in improving teachers' professional development in new innovations within inclusive education as it provides them with opportunities to engage in debates and dialogues as well as observe demonstrations of required behaviour (Ntombela, 2011). Conversations about disability assist towards improved quality of teaching and learning for learners with disabilities and greater support for the teachers as they implement inclusion in their settings. To promote conversation

and debate about inclusive education, Yeo et al. (2014) recommend that training in inclusive education should provide mainstream school teachers with the opportunity to co-teach with a colleague who has been trained in special needs and intervention in order for them to observe effective specialist support first hand.

Educators would also benefit from the support of their educator peers in the curriculum differentiation process (Nel, et al. 2011). Through collaboration with their peers, “the unique and specialised knowledge and skills and the team are harnessed (synergy) and higher-level thinking and novel solutions are generated as team members exchange resources and expertise.” (Nel, et al., 2011: 199).

## 2.8 Summary

The literature review has highlighted the importance of the learning facilitator in the achievement of learning outcomes for adults with ID in post-school institutions. It focused on how learning facilitators provide the training and administer the assessments through differentiated curriculum strategies, their attitudes and perspectives towards ID, the types of challenges they need to overcome, and what support they require. It has also outlined the inaccessibility of post-school institutions for adults with ID and the need for learning facilitators to be trained and supported in how to successfully include adults with ID in their classrooms. In this study regarding Organisation X-initiated learnerships in partnership with three post-school institutions, we identify and describe the challenges learning facilitators faced, their perspectives about people with ID in learnerships programmes, curriculum differentiation strategies they used to teach, and what their support needs were during these learnerships. The next chapter addresses the research design.

## CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH DESIGN

### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher provides a rationale for the study methodology and methods, for the sampling and participants, the processes followed in collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data, and the principles used to ensure ethical research standards were maintained. The chapter concludes with comments on the methodological approach used and confirming trustworthiness and ethical research practice.

### 3.2 Situating the Researcher

The researcher is an occupational therapist working in training and development at Organisation X. The researcher does not work in the project at Organisation X that was responsible for managing the three learnerships referred to in this study. As such, she had nothing to do with the learning facilitators or the post-school institutions providing the teaching for learners who participated in the learnerships. Subsequent to these learnerships, the researcher has become involved in the development of the bridging programme within the project at Organisation X. The outcome of this study will influence the nature of the training that is provided by the researcher, as she will be involved in the training of learning facilitators within the bridging programme.

#### Researcher assumptions:

The researcher operated under the following assumptions during the study:

- The learning facilitators employed at the post-school institutions had no training on ID and inclusive education before they engaged learners with ID in their classrooms and did not perceive themselves to have been adequately equipped and trained to include people with ID in a post-school setting.
- The learning facilitators all experienced many challenges in facilitating learning appropriately within the learnership programmes, mostly related to knowing how to differentiate the accredited curriculum to suit the specific needs of all the learners.
- The learning facilitators at the post-school institutions were dependent on the learning facilitators at Organisation X for guidance on how to differentiate the learnership curriculum.



### 3.3 Methodology

A *qualitative descriptive research design* was used because it was necessary to gain qualitative rather than quantitative data that describe how participants teach adults with mild and moderate ID in post-school institutions. Qualitative descriptive studies tend to “draw from the general tenets of naturalistic inquiry” that commits “to studying something in its natural state, or as it is, to the extent to which this is possible” (Sandelowski, 2000: 337). A qualitative descriptive study was indicated because a “straight and largely unadorned (i.e. minimally theorised or otherwise transformed or spun) description of phenomena” was desired (Sandelowski, 2000: 337). Qualitative descriptive studies do not require the researcher to move interpretively into data (Sandelowski, 2000), making it possible for the researcher to use the findings to inform the design of the facilitator training programme at Organisation X. Descriptions must always accurately convey events in their proper sequence and have descriptive validity in terms of the meanings participants attributed to those events (Sandelowski, 2000). Researchers using this design need “to collect as much data as they can that will allow them to capture all of the elements of an event that come together and make it the event that it is.” (Sandelowski, 2000: 336). Sandelowski (2000) views this research design as producing a complete and valued end-product in itself, which in this case will be useful in describing how learning facilitators in learnerships teach adults with ID in this study.

### 3.4 Method

An in-depth, moderately structured open-ended interview method (Neergaard, Olesen, Andersen & Sondergaard, 2009) was used to collect data from six participants. Data collection in qualitative descriptive studies is typically “directed toward discovering the *who*, *what*, and *where* of events or experiences, or their basic nature and shape.” (Sandelowski, 2000: 338). Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. A total of six hours of interview data was obtained.

The interview guide used in qualitative descriptive research is “typically based on expert knowledge to focus on areas that are either poorly understood or potentially amenable to intervention.” (Neergaard et al., 2009: 2). The interview guide was designed by the researcher using the UDL framework to structure the questions for the interviews according to the three UDL principles and their guidelines (refer to 2.5.2). Please see the

interview schedule in Appendix C. Before the interview started, the participants were requested to complete a short participant information form (see Appendix D) to capture basic facts about their work experience, current work place, qualifications, as well as their chosen pseudonym (which the researcher decided afterwards not to use in the Findings Chapter of this research).

The interview method was considered relevant because it allowed “individuals to respond in their own words to express their personal categorizations and perceived associations” (Coenen, Stamm, Stucki & Cieza, 2012: 359) and “explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation (Pathfinder International, 2006); it also allowed “the researcher and respondent the liberty to explore an issue within the framework of a guided conversation” (Prairie Research Associates, n.d.). Furthermore, the interview method was considered useful because it allowed the researcher to gain the individual perspectives of the learning facilitators regarding the strategies they used in the learnership programme as well as their challenges, support needs and inclusion perspectives.

Disadvantages of interviews include that they are susceptible to bias, for example, the participant may want to please the researcher, or they may want to make a good impression and not answer as honestly (Pathfinder International, 2006). The researcher in turn may also influence the participants’ responses through expressing surprise or disapproval (Pathfinder International, 2006). Potential biases in the use of the interview method were overcome in this study by the researcher monitoring her expressions during the interviews and re-assuring the participant that there were no desired or undesired answers and that no judgements would be made. Interviews must be conducted by a researcher properly trained in interview techniques (Pathfinder International, 2006). The researcher is a qualified occupational therapist who is trained in the skills of interviewing and has successfully completed the two Research Methods courses in the Masters Coursework programme at the University of Cape Town.

### **3.5 Logistics, structure and process**

#### **3.5.1 Recruitment**

The researcher firstly gained the contact details of the post-school institutions from her employer before contacting them to seek permission from them to conduct this study with a member of their staff, should they still be employed there at the time of data collection.

For those participants that were no longer employed at that institution, the participant was called directly.

The participants were contacted telephonically to request that they participate in the study. They were then sent written information (Appendix A) regarding the study via post or email as preferred as well as informed consent forms (Appendix B). Once the participant indicated that they would be willing to sign the forms and participate, the interview was set at a time and place convenient and comfortable for the participant.

### 3.5.2 Sampling

Purposive total population sampling was used, The total population of learning facilitators, seven in total, that were involved in the learnerships for adults with ID were approached to participate as the study sample. The population included:

- Four lecturers (“learning facilitators”) who were employed at the post-school institutions who were involved in the implementation of the three learnerships at Organisation X.
- Three job coaches (“learning facilitators”) who were employed by Organisation X who were involved in the three learnerships.

The table below shows the three learnerships and how many classes there were, how many lecturers there were and how many job coaches there were per learnership:

**Table 3 – Number of classrooms, lecturers and job coaches per learnership**

<b>Number of</b>	<b>Hygiene and Cleaning Learnership</b>	<b>Business Administration</b>	<b>Clothing Manufacturing Processes</b>
<b>Classrooms</b>	2	1	1
<b>Lecturers</b>	2	1	1
<b>Job coaches</b>	1	1	1

The following inclusion criterion was applied:

- Learning facilitators who participated in any of the three learnership programmes with adults with ID that were coordinated by Organisation X in 2012 and 2014.

The following exclusion criterion was applied:

- Learning facilitators who have no experience of teaching adults with mild or moderate ID in a learnership programme at a post-school institution in partnership with Organisation X.

Only six of these learning facilitators agreed to participate in the study and were all interviewed on one occasion.

**Table 4 – Sample demographics (see Appendix D)**

<b>Partici- pant No.</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Work history</b>	<b>Year of learnership experience</b>
<b>1</b>	41	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Auxiliary Social Worker</li> <li>○ Certificate in first aid</li> <li>○ Qualified assessor and moderator</li> </ul>	Trainer, assessor and first aider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Senior trainer at an NGO prior to current position</li> </ul>	2012
<b>2</b>	40	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Registered health professional</li> </ul>	Life Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Counsellor and Job Coach</li> </ul>	2012
<b>3</b>	51	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessor</li> </ul>	Team leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trainer and assessor, self-employed</li> </ul>	2012
<b>4</b>	49	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA)</li> <li>○ Qualified Job Coach</li> </ul>	Job Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 10 years as an OTA, 15 years as a job coach</li> </ul>	2012 and 2014

5	44	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social Auxiliary Worker</li> <li>○ Higher Diploma in Education, Training and Development</li> <li>○ Advanced Diploma in Education of Adults</li> </ul>	Lecturer: Afrikaans and Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Counsellor and Referral Officer on child abuse-related cases/ children at risk</li> <li>○ Adult Basic Education and Training / Adult Education and Training facilitator and assessor</li> <li>○ Facilitator and assessor for skills development training</li> </ul>	2012
6	34	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ LLB (Law)</li> </ul>	Company secretariat consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Commercial law attorney</li> </ul>	2012

### 3.5.3. Interview process

The researcher met with six participants during the months of March and April 2017 at a location and time of day that was most suitable and convenient for them. They were asked to select venues that were private and quiet. The average interview length was one hour per interview, with the shortest interview taking thirty minutes and the longest interview taking ninety minutes. Each interview was tape-recorded, with consent from the participant secured beforehand. Each participant was asked to select their own pseudonyms at the beginning of the interview that was used when asking questions during the interview to ensure confidentiality when using an external transcriber. The researcher started by thanking them for their participation and asking them if they still wanted to participate. They were reminded of their right to withdraw from the interview at any time they wanted to. The researcher assured them that what they shared would be kept confidential and that their selected pseudonyms would be used.

Only once the first interview with each participant had been transcribed, was the researcher able to determine whether a second interview was indicated as more information was still required. No second interviews were required as data saturation had been reached. Each participant was given a reflective journal to write in should they think of any additional information after the interview; none of the participants had anything further to add.

### **3.6 Data Management**

Each interview was recorded on two digital recorders to prevent loss of data through technical problems. The files were downloaded onto the researcher's laptop and backed up onto a desktop computer. Access to this data was protected by a password. As soon as the data was downloaded onto the computers, it was erased off the two recording devices. All hard copy documents (including interview notes made by the researcher) were safely stored either in a locked drawer at the researcher's home or work office. Five of the interview recordings were transcribed by the researcher and one by an independent person who was asked to assist in order to save time.

### **3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Within 10–14 days of each interview the researcher listened to the recording and made notes. These notes provided a summary of the discussions from each of the interviews conducted. After the first and second interviews, the interview schedule was reviewed and a few minor changes were made. Although the questions on the schedule were used with all the participants, slightly different questions and probes were used to ensure that all aspects were covered adequately with each participant.

The strategy of qualitative content analysis was used (Neergaard et al., 2009; and Sandelowski, 2000). This involved codes being generated from the data themselves in the course of the study and the researcher being reflexive and interactive by continuously modifying the treatment of data to accommodate new data and new insights about those data (Sandelowski, 2000: 338). The six analytic strategies in qualitative descriptive research design proposed by Milles et al. (1994) in Neergaard et al. (2009:3) was used to analyse the data:

1. Coding of data from interviews: an online electronic application programme – Dedoose (2017) – was used to highlight and name all the codes and store them in an easily accessible format;

2. Recording insights and reflections on the coded data (see Appendix F, G and H for examples of the first layer of analysis);
3. Sorting through the data to identify similar phrases, patterns, themes, sequences and important features resulting in themes being identified;
4. Looking for commonalities and differences among the data and extracting them for further consideration and analysis resulting in sub-categories;
5. Gradually deciding on a small group or generalisations that hold true for the data resulting in categories;
6. Examining these generalisations in the light of existing knowledge.

Once the findings had been diagrammatically represented in the form of theme, categories and subcategories and analysed using text, the first draft of the findings document was presented to the participants as part of a member checking process. They were asked to read through the findings document and inform the researcher of an appropriate time that the researcher could call them for their feedback on these findings. The researcher met with one participant on 13 September 2017. Three other participants emailed their responses to the findings as this was their preference. One participant did not respond to the request for feedback and the other participant was not able to avail the time to read through the materials and provide feedback due to a busy schedule.

The participants were requested to provide any feedback comments to verify the analysis and to ensure that the content was correct in terms of facts and implied meaning. All four participants confirmed the analysis, facts and implied meaning attributed to these. The codes, sub-categories, categories and theme were discussed with the researcher's supervisors.

### **3.8 Research Rigour**

Purposive sampling assisted in ensuring that the potentially different experiences and perspectives of the learning facilitators were elicited to promote richness in the data. The views of the six participants did not necessarily represent the views of those who were excluded. Although the participants were involved in teaching adults with ID in these three learnerships at least three to five years before, they were all able to recall their experiences.

The trustworthiness of the data analysis and process was ensured by adhering to the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Trustworthiness in this study was also achieved by (Creswell, 2013):

- Using a recognised approach to inquiry, qualitative descriptive.
- Involving the participants in member checking where the participants review the analysis of their individual transcripts, the themes, categories and sub-categories for accuracy.

### **3.8.1 Credibility**

The interviews were all transcribed verbatim. After the analysis stage, member checking was done with all the participants. The researcher remained reflexive throughout the research process. Koch (1994) recommended the use of a journal to allow others to understand and follow the decisions the researcher has made during the study and to ensure that there is transparency of process and method. The researcher used a reflective journal to detail the progress of the work as well as personal reflections and insights.

### **3.8.2 Transferability**

Standard procedures for conducting interviews were maintained and the information contained in this chapter is detailed enough to allow the process to be replicated in another study. See Appendix F for audit trail.

### **3.8.3 Dependability**

Direct anonymised quotations and comprehensive descriptions of the data were done. The questions used by the researcher during the interviews are available (see Appendix C).

### **3.8.4 Confirmability**

Member checking was done during follow-up sessions with all the participants. The researcher was also reflexive and aware of her own assumptions, which are documented above (see 3.2).

## **3.9 Research Ethics**

Approval for this study was granted by the University of Cape Town's Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix E) with reference number



007/2017. This research adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013).

### **3.9.1. Informed consent**

The researcher ensured that the study information letter (Appendix A) was disseminated to each participant along with the consent form (Appendix B) before they participated. Before the first interview began, the researcher explained the study and requirements and asked whether they had any questions.

### **3.9.2 Autonomy**

The participants were only selected on a voluntary basis with informed consent and the purpose of the study and requirements were explained in writing and verbally. They all received an information letter (Appendix A). The participants were informed that they could choose to withdraw at any time. None took this option. The staff approached at Organisation X worked within another department to that of the researcher who ensured that they understood that their non-participation would not have any impact on their job. As five out of the six participants were no longer employed or formally partnering with Organisation X, there was no undue influence over the potential participants to participate in the research.

### **3.9.3 Beneficence**

One of the study outcomes that will be beneficial to post-school learning facilitators will be that their training and support needs are now clarified and therefore amenable to guiding the necessary adaptations and accommodations for future learners with ID.

### **3.9.4 Non-Maleficence**

This study presented no undue harm to the participants. No participant required debriefing or support. If intervention proved necessary, they would have been referred to Cape Mental Health for counselling at no cost to themselves.

### **3.9.5 Confidentiality**

Each participant selected their own pseudonym that was used and referred to throughout the study. The anonymity of the participant and post-school institution is maintained in the text and through other dissemination processes. For this reason, participants' names have

been deleted on the signed informed consent forms included in Appendix B. The originals are kept safe and confidential as previously described.

Copies of the interview transcripts, the interview audio files, as well as additional interview notes, were stored electronically on a memory stick and on the password-protected hard drive of the researcher's personal computer.

All data was locked in a filing cabinet and stored in a secure place at the researcher's work site, Organisation X. The anonymous data will be stored for three years on a computer disk, at which time it will be permanently erased. Tapes of the interviews were recorded over at this time, and paper information, such as transcripts, was shredded.

### **3.9.6 Justice**

There was no unfair exclusion of participants in this study.

### **3.9.7 Risks and benefits**

There were no known risks to the participants (financial, physical or other) in this study. Post-school institutions that provided education and training for lecturers and learning facilitators on teaching in post-school settings will also benefit from the findings of this research and gain more insights into the learning facilitators' training and subsequent support needs relating to the inclusion of adults with ID in the post-school institution classroom.

All travelling costs to get to and from the venue were covered by the researcher. No deductions from the participants' salaries or annual leave had to be made for their participation in the research. The time was arranged when it was convenient to the participants.

The participants did not receive any compensation to participate in the study.

No other research staff members were involved in this study; only the student researcher and the two University of Cape Town supervisors. There were no conflicts of interest.

### **3.9.8 Freedom of Expression**

The participants' freedom of expression was protected and care was taken to ensure that they were not intimidated or made to feel uncomfortable to express their opinions. The research ensured that each participant was treated with respect by using effective listening skills and ensuring that a patronising attitude was avoided.

### 3.10 Summary

This chapter has provided details regarding the choice of qualitative descriptive research methodology, why the choice was made, as well as the benefits. It outlines specific details about how research rigor, data collection, data analysis and ethical procedures were performed. The methodological approaches followed in this research study were adhered to in sufficient detail for trustworthy and ethical research. The following chapter describes all the findings that were obtained from the data.

## CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS

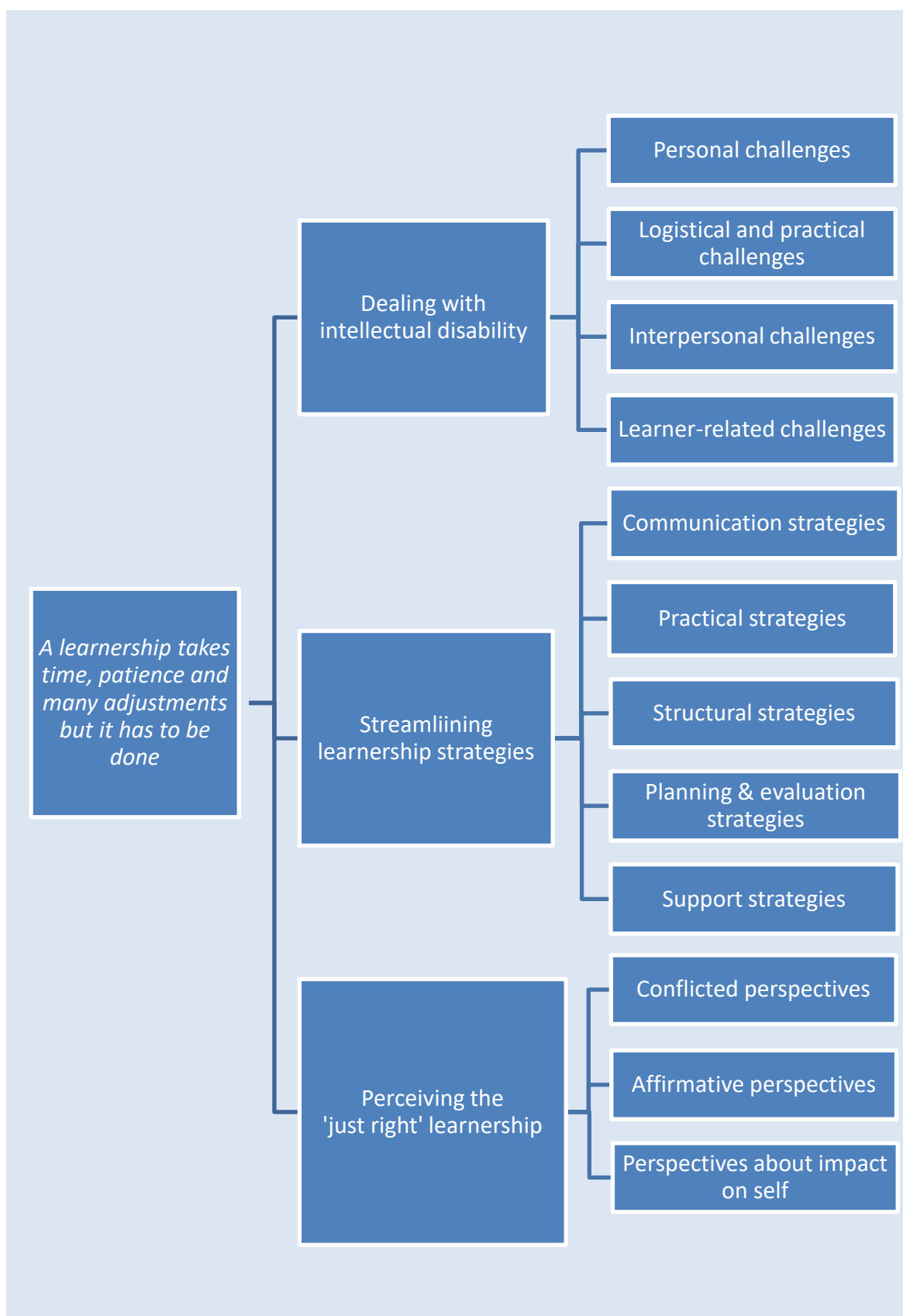
### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings are represented diagrammatically and through rich description of the input that was received from the learning facilitators. The evidence of the findings is presented through one theme, namely *“a learnership takes time, patience and many adjustments but it has to be done”*. This theme was consolidated from three categories: *“dealing with intellectual disability”*; *“streamlining learnership strategies”* and *“perceiving the ‘just right’ learnership”* that were synthesised from the twelve subcategories. These twelve sub-categories reflect the groups of the first order codes and provide details of how the learning facilitators interviewed for this study went about teaching adults with mild and moderate ID in learnership programmes at post-school institutions.

### 4.2 Theme: **“A learnership takes time, patience and many adjustments but it has to be done”**

The theme captures the essence of teaching people with ID in a learnership. Figure 1 depicts the composition of the theme, consisting of three categories and twelve sub-categories.

Figure 1 – The composition of the theme



The theme reflects what a learnership requires learning facilitators to do (practically) and to be (attitudinally) when teaching people with ID. It indicates that even though learning facilitators have to work out many adjustments and put in more time and effort when teaching people with ID than when teaching non-disabled learners, they feel that the additional demands on them as educators are worth it because people with ID have the right to access post-school learning opportunities matched to their abilities.

### 4.3 Three categories of findings

The findings of three categories and corresponding sub-categories are now presented, indicating the kinds of adjustments, time and effort required to promote the participation of people with ID in post-school learnerships.

#### 4.3.1 Category one: Dealing with intellectual disability

The findings in category one reflect the challenges associated with teaching learners with ID in a learnership context. It consists of four sub-categories, each containing a particular type of challenge in dealing with ID in the classroom. The sub-categories (personal, logistical and practical, interpersonal and learner-related) highlight the scope of what the learning facilitators had to go through and handle while teaching during these learnerships.

**Personal challenges:** The codes identified challenges that related to personal factors within the learning facilitators, their co-facilitator colleagues and/or practical placement supervisors that impacted the teaching, such as feelings of frustration in the classroom, inexperience, limited choice and ethical dilemmas.

*I found that, um, on many occasions the facilitator [co-learning facilitator] would just get frustrated and would say like: "Are they always like this?" You know, um, "They don't listen to me" and on on one or two occasions a a facilitator [co-learning facilitator] would actually walk out and say: "I had enough". Um, and then I had to calm her down and say like: "Ok fine, can I take over the lesson?" [Participant 1, p. 4]*

*...so when I started I didn't have any knowledge regarding intellectual disability, uh, so I wasn't sure what to expect... [Participant 3, p. 3]*

One facilitator felt that they did not have a choice to teach the learners with ID in the learnership and was ethically challenged with having to “push them through” the learnership.

*...she says that I needed to do what we have to do, and that is to push them through – this is an agreement that has to be done and the reality it is that this is, what you are sitting with, you are, uh uh uh, you sitting with a hard rock and a what was that, what that...?*

*UCT Researcher: Between a rock and a hard place?*

*Participant 6: Yea, something that you you, this is the only thing that you, that you have to do just, just to do so they can go through. [Participant 6, p. 15]*

**Logistical and practical challenges:** Logistical and practical challenges such as learnership structure, classroom-based barriers, and limited resources and time affected their ability to teach in the learnerships.

The curriculum and assessment structure of the learnership posed a challenge for the learning facilitators as they had to use the training materials given to them from the college, abide by their assessment procedures, cover the volume of work assigned in the timeframe of the learnership on time, and complete all the necessary paperwork procedures. Learning facilitators reported that the materials were too complex and not structured in a format that learners with ID could understand or engage with, such as being simplified by the use of practical demonstrations and visuals:

*...I was always told that um, I could only just take out and simplify, because the module itself had lots of big jaw-break word; they like a lot of English terminology and things [Participant 1, p. 15]*

*...but I think that materials itself should have been broken down, broken down and made it more user friendly...*

*...they are more visual and concrete so, and um, for them to do things practically that is more um instead of um abstract or, you know those type of things, it doesn't work well for them so, um, with the administrative stuff, or administration, um, it wasn't made practical enough for them – it's just largely theory-based and I believe that, you know, um, there can*

*be a certain aspect to administration, but there should should be a certain level that will accommodate to them, do you know, but uh, and uh, but the training material is the core thing that needs to be put into place to be accommodative for them ya and that wasn't, that didn't happen, that did not happen. [Participant 6, p. 2]*

Learning facilitators also found that the way in which the assessments and practical placements were structured did not allow for learners with ID to implement what they had learnt in the classroom:

*...what I found is that um, you couldn't use any visuals at this point, um, which made it very difficult, so I used explanations, um, sometimes they [exam writer] asked the questions differently – they'll try to trick the person, so when you ask questions differently um, it means that our trainee is not going to be able to answer the question, so the whole time they learning to understand the word "component" and now when it comes to the assessment, they [exam writer] ask you different question, so that was quite...tricky." [Participant 1, p. 87]*

*...it was different when it was time for their practical experience. That is why I said a lot has been done, a lot needs to be done, because if you take, when you took them for practical experience and then you communicate with whoever is going to be in charge of them in the placement and then you said: "Ok now please give them duties that are related to what they are doing." But when you come back, they doing something different. They doing something totally different. [Participant 2, p. 4]*

The work volume was too high for people with ID that placed much pressure on the learning facilitators who had to take them through the process:

*...the the the amount of work, the amount of work, is for a high functioning person and it's just writing. [Participant 6, p. 1]*

The paperwork and procedures involved in the learnership posed a challenge for learning facilitators:

*It was quite tough, ya, it was very tough. I think I I I struggled to understand why that [editing assignments with each learner] was even necessary because just the lengthy part that it took us with, it took us*



*most probably like a month to get all of those things [documents to edit] and I'm like, I found that where there so many things that we could have focused on than to spend so much time on something like that... [Participant 1, p. 151]*

There were also logistical and practical in-classroom challenges such as the physical classroom size being too small, lack of breaks built into the daily lessons, poor classroom climate control, and language barriers:

*...our trainees definitely goes with information overload and I think that they [the college] don't always have built into their lessons a refresher – I had to create my own refresher for my, for our learners, most of the time, so that was a kind of a thing that's not built in... [Participant 1, p. 24]*

*...the space itself was quite uh, a challenge, um, because we had a group of twenty-five, um I think that was a lot – there was five too much in that group, um, so sometimes the trainees weren't able to see that well... [Participant 1, p. 21]*

*...also sometimes the heat, cos if it's hot it's actually made a different to the class, like I'm sure it will for any of us if it's really hot outside and the classroom is hot, it's just, your energy goes down... [Participant 3, p. 13]*

*They have a problem of the language barrier cos they don't understand English some of them. [Participant 5, p. 1]*

Learning facilitators also indicated challenges relating to the limited resources provided by the college and the learnership stipend pay-out delays.

*We did ask (College A)<sup>1</sup> about visuals – they didn't always come on board with visuals really, um, although they said: "Ya, no, those are the things that we do use" so forth, but when you actually ask them for it then they could really never provide it, so we had to create our own, ya, create our own visuals. [Participant 1, p. 23]*

*Uh, a big challenge that was also something that happened, uh, threatened us, or was a big challenge for us all the time was the stipend*

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

*payments was late from the from the SETA side and then they used to um, talk about, because we, uh, there was a tranche that needed uh to be paid, uh written out every three months or whatever it was and this was a big challenge for us also as well because when the tranches was running late, it means that our trainees they also lose a little bit of interest of being there... [Participant 1, p. 13]*

The learning facilitators found that more time was needed to prepare the materials, learners and colleges before the learnerships started. They also needed more time to complete the learnership itself as the timeframe was too short for the learners to complete the work, but they were not afforded this time.

*...because of the time because now these learnership they come and then immediately we need to, they need to undergo this particular learnership and then there's no time for anything and they need good preparations. They need, you know, before they can go for a learnership, for that particular learnership, they need to be prepared. They need to be mental prepared, because it's something new to them, you know, even the words that are being used, even the experience itself because, remember that... [Participant 2, p. 3]*

**Inter-personal challenges:** There were interpersonal dynamics between the learning facilitators and their co-facilitators in the classroom, the supervisors at the colleges and the learning facilitators, as well as between the organisations where the practical placements were taking place and the learning facilitators.

Some learning facilitators felt that the supervisors at the colleges were not supportive to their staff members facilitating the learnership.

*So I, I never get support from the company, I only get the support from the the people that I'm I'm busy with and the family members and the staff members. [Participant 5, p. 19]*

One facilitator noticed that her colleague was not receiving support or understanding from the college management regarding the time that was required in order to teach learners with ID:

*...at that time she was also getting pressure from her manager: "Why are you taking this long?" We do not have time for that?" [Participant 2, p. 5]*

One learning facilitator reported that she felt the learners respected her as an authority figure that caused a barrier to her communication with them.

*When it's lunch time then, we eat together so that to stop that thing of afraid of me, because there was so much respect, so much that is was difficult for them when I spoke with them... [Participant 5, p. 9]*

Another learning facilitator found it challenging when the learners with ID experienced teasing from other learners at the college who did not have ID:

*...remember that, in that institution there were mixed with people that are not disabled and the most difficult time as well was when some of them were teasing the learners, you know, and then you trying to comfort the learner and encourage the learner not to to quit and at the same time you trying to explain the reason why it is good for the learner to attend the learnership, the learnership itself. So, I think that was a bit difficult for me because now it was not only one issue that was taking place, it was eh eh many issues [Participant 2, p. 3]*

The workplace supervisors / mentors also caused difficulties for the learning facilitators as they were not always cooperative or supportive when it came to assisting the learners with their workplace assignments and responsibilities:

*And sometimes, you know, they had to do the assignment together with their mentor in the workplace and it was difficult because the mentors didn't have time for that, they did not have time for that [Participant 2, p. 13]*

**Learner-related challenges:** Learning facilitators found that learners with ID have difficulty engaging in a formal and structured learnership process due to the nature of their disability and the fact that they have not been exposed to this type of learning environment previously:

*[Sighs] Uh, you know, it's it's a very, it's a very big challenges, I can say because it's not easy to deal with disability. That is a challenge itself because you must remember I'm not disabled, but now I have to change my situation to understand their situation as well. [Participant 5, p. 21]*

Some of the challenging behaviours and/or attitudes they experienced with the learners included: low levels of endurance and motivation, becoming emotional, immature behaviour, low confidence levels, and limited life skills.

*...you know the most difficult part for me was when the learners could not take it anymore, some of the learners said: "Ok now, this is too difficult for me, I can't take...I can't go on, I'm going to quit. [Participant 2, p. 3]*

*...you know that this person that you now working with, this person with intellectual disability, have got very limited um, life skills kind of experience. They quite a little bit inappropriate; they don't have the time management sorted out, budgeting can be a little bit of issue, they little bit reckless with their monies and then also Open Labour Market Preparedness; they don't really know and understand a lot about CVs... [Participant 1, p. 6]*

The learning facilitators also found it challenging to work within the cognitive limitations that many of the learners have, namely: low concentration levels, limited memory abilities, low literacy and numeracy levels, slower learning pace, poor communication skills, and limited ability to grasp abstract concepts.

*I mean the main thing is the, the content, ge- grasping the content and that is what we we found we had a huge challenge, ya. It was a lot abstract. [Participant 6, p. 5]*

*So I think the attention span thing, that was definitely a challenge, um, I didn't always, the amount of work I set out to do in the day, that was dependent on their attention span, obviously their understanding as well, but the understanding part you could deal with, but the attention you, if they [laughs] if it was going to go there was nothing that you could do about it. [Participant 3, p. 14]*

*...so for the first weeks I deal with them it was not easy – it was so hard for me because I realise that it's more than necessary because some of them, they can't read, some of them they can't write, some of them they can't hear, some of them they they they struggle to be open. [Participant 5, p. 1]*

*...I think for people who can't read and write ... it's a high jump...  
[Participant 4, p. 5]*

*...sometimes, you know, they grasp the information and then the others days gone, that information is gone. You need to make sure you instil that information because what's the use of them taking the information and then now when it's come for the, when it's time for them to, to be employed they cannot apply that information in a work environment, they forgot about it! [Participant 2, p. 7]*

#### 4.3.2 Category two: Streamlining learnership strategies

Category two captures findings about the curriculum differentiation strategies used by learning facilitators when teaching learners with ID in a learnership context. It is grouped into five sub-categories (viz. communication strategies, practical strategies, structural strategies, planning and evaluation strategies, and support strategies), each containing a set of practical steps or approaches that they employed to teach.

*Because eh, you know, I'm still saying that now the training methodology, it needs to change. It needs to be adjusted, it needs to be suitable for them...and I know it takes a whole lot of time, it takes a whole lot of patience, but it has to be done. [Participant 2, p. 2]*

**Communication strategies:** These relate to how the learning facilitators communicated with the learners while teaching in order to maximise their learning in the classroom.

The communication strategies used by the learning facilitators are tabulated below, each substantiated with a quotation.

**Table 5 – Communication differentiation strategies**

	Communication strategy	Learning Facilitator Quotation
1	Use the mother tongue of the learners	<i>"...change that in Xhosa, same thing, but do it in Xhosa...so, it was easy for them." [Participant 5, p. 8]</i>
2	Verbal input is better than written	<i>"...you do the the the the questions, you read the questions for them and then you explain that question to them and then they able to answer you..." [Participant 5, p. 15]</i>

3	Get to know your learners and build a relationship with them	<p><i>"You will first go into the class and you will connect with these students and check in with them how they are how they feeling... umm... you know is there anything troubling or because sometimes they would come with with because of backgrounds and so on, you know people come into a classroom and it is not ... it is the person there but they they come with with their own situational barriers and so on also... so you will first connect with them and check how they are and.. you know in order for learning to happen..." [Participant 4, p. 4]</i></p>
4	Encourage mutual respect and trust	<p><i>"I think that when I started and I started with their, their mutual respect I think then I got, I got respect from them, right, 'cos uh, some of them were apprehensive in the beginning, ok, very apprehensive because they've never done it before, so I, so I thought to, to put everyone at ease that I didn't want like a teacher-student type of relationship, it was more of understanding what was happening, like what was happening in the modules, so I tried to gain their trust, ok, and respect and with that I actually, I must be honest and say that, uh, it it was just was nicer. So with that they would then listen to me, they would give me that attention." [Participant 6, p. 12]</i></p>
5	Encourage participation and feedback from learners and listen to them	<p><i>"I think ...umm...I think the best way was to get umm ahh to get them talking as well...umm....so you will ask them for example okay today we gonna look at how do we wash the windows... okay ...and then ask somebody to umm you know maybe tell us or tell the larger group how do you normally wash a window you know so get them interacted and umm...you know hear from them and so umm..." [Participant 4, p. 17]</i></p> <p><i>"you know you should give everybody a chance you listen, cos that's the most important thing and I think that's the one thing that that people don't understand, people with intellectual disabilities they actually just want to be heard. They perhaps not given the opportunity, or they scared they gonna say something wrong, so ya." [Participant 3, p. 6]</i></p>

6	Encourage interaction between learners	<i>"the way I believe people learn and how they construct knowledge and so on so you know I fancy a lot people working together and you know um and not working in isolation and somebody just sitting on their own and you know we we learn by interacting with each other so generally I allow people to sit together and you know um put them in small groups talk to each other and if you don't know somebody else you know might help you along and guide you along and ask if you don't know"</i> [Participant 4, p. 18]
7	Provide support, motivation and guidance at all times	<i>"...I think sometimes they needed...I think sometimes they just needed more guidance...ummm...you know somebody can explain to you something and then they...you know while explaining they tell you something else you know..."</i> [Participant 4, p. 18]
8	Explain concepts thoroughly and use repetition	<i>"And also, with intellectual disabilities, their grasping of certain things are not always, they don't always grasp quickly, so it needs to be explained again. So I used to try to explain one particular thing in many different ways, cos the one understands, but the other do not understand so you need to explain it again in a different way..."</i> [Participant 3, p. 4]
9	Keep positive, using humour and make the lessons fun	<i>"...you can even make a joke during that question, in between that question, to attract their attention and also to maintain that attention as well, make it fun, make the training fun. If you make training fun then also yourself you won't feel that much pressure because you get more response, you get more attention from the learners as well. And also, if you are frustrated about something maybe within the content of the training, you cannot show the learners that you are frustrated, because, remember that you are their mentor and once they see you frustrated about the training it's like how much more for them? They will lose hope because now, they got all their hopes on you [laughs]." [Participant 2, pp. 6–7]</i>

10	Be transparent and prepare the learners for what is going to happen	<p><i>"Ok, so what I would do is I choose a few pages say, let's say the first module, uh, I tell them, 'cos I believed in transparency, so I'll tell them beginning of the course, the day: "We're going to finish seven pages today, right?""</i></p> <p><i>[Participant 3, p. 4]</i></p> <p><i>"... 'cos the thing is also they were very anxious so you needed to also consider that, you couldn't just spring things onto them. So, so I tell them, ok this week we gonna have a spot test only on five pages and from there I would be able to gauge."</i> <i>[Participant 3, p. 6]</i></p>
11	Be patient and show confidence	<p><i>"she needs to be confid-, she or he needs to be confident that you know, um, when they are done with this or when she's gonna do it, they are gonna get it. And in that way it will help boost their self-confidence, um, and uh, and even more ready and confident and excited to go to the practical, you know, so um it has a ripple effect, but the root is training material and how the, um, facilitator takes on that, yes, patience is also a quality that uh, the the facilitator needs to have um with this whole process as well, ya."</i> <i>[Participant 6, p. 3]</i></p>

**Practical strategies:** These related to the practical ways that the learning facilitators adapted the learnership curriculum content as well as their teaching and assessment methodologies in order to ensure understanding for the learners.

The practical strategies used by the learning facilitators are tabulated below together with the quotation from the learning facilitator/s:



Table 6 – Practical strategies

	Practical strategy	Learning Facilitator Quotation
1	Use concrete examples, practical demonstrations and visuals	<p><i>"...you will also ah you will also then show them how it should be done and so on... so it not just matter of standing there and talking all the time, you know with with somebody with people who are not intellectually challenged you can you can just talk...but with people with with this group of people you couldn't just do that do that, there was a lot of practical ba- umm work involve...a lot of practical work..." [Participant 4, p. 4]</i></p> <p><i>"For my, for my side my dear I don't want to lie, uh, for those learners uh that have intellectual disability I so wish for them to do things practical more than anything. Practical is very good for them, more than theory and writing and stuff, better they must have training in practical, much better." [Participant 5, p. 6]</i></p> <p><i>"...we had to make it into you, u-u-u um, make it, give examples a lot of examples. So that was one of the, giving a lot of examples, and trying to make it as real as possible for them." [Participant 6, p. 5]</i></p>
2	Use activities and roleplay to reinforce learning and involve the learners	<p><i>"So, there were activities, I will engage them in a certain activity and say: 'Ok now, what do you think is a manager? What what does a manager do?' Just to get, you know, just to engage them, you know, because if you do not engage them in an activity, they feel left out and then they immediately switch off. So in order for you to get more...more response and also to make them understand do it in a more practical way. Do roleplays, and the roleplay it does work, it work well it works well [laughs]. You have to do a roleplay and they don't find it, you know sometimes when do a-, when you training adults sometimes they said 'Ok you doing a roleplay, we too old for that' so i-it's it's a different thing when it comes to people, adults with intellectual disability, they enjoy that, they enjoy being involved and you know, they can also, you know, they act the part as well. That's what made me excited, they, they will act the part, they will do their best and then you also expl- : 'Ok now this is how it's done'." [Participant 2, p. 6]</i></p>

3	Simplify curriculum and instruction and summarise the key outcomes of the curriculum	<p><i>"...we actually helped them make their lessons more um, simpler and and and and trainees then understood, um, the kind of uh, the kind of lesson they were receiving um with the, with the visuals, with the practical kind of um, uh things that just with using simpler words..."</i>  [Participant 1, p. 3]</p> <p><i>"Um, so I summarised it, just to take out the important points and then only lecturing on that, facilitate on that 'cos so not, so that they don't have too much content 'cos it's overwhelming, we all know, we studied, too much content is overwhelming, so I summarised it for them and then I'd only facilitate, ya, the important points"</i>  [Participant 3, p. 8].</p>
4	Use different ways for learners to understand assessment questions: multiple choice questions, prompting and rephrasing	<p><i>"...this is not working for for these learners so how can we adjust it, how can we make it work for them and that was umm and and (job coach)<sup>2</sup> and myself and my colleague that is where we sat and we said okay try and make it multiple questions and try...uh...multiple choice and try and make it mix and match and try something else you know so so that is where we had the ability to do that yes .. umm but still met the outcome ..."</i> [Participant 4, p. 14]</p> <p><i>"...some of them forgot certain things, then I would have to say like: "What kind of a pants would you wear? Would you wear a normal jeans like what I'm wearing? What kind of clothing?" So it's kind of you know, prompting questions all the time..."</i> [Participant 1, p. 20]</p> <p><i>"Because sometimes a question comes and then when you read the question it's something that you've never heard, but now when they, we simplify those question: "Oh this is what you are taking about"."</i> [Participant 2, p. 12]</p>

<sup>2</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

5	Adapt the ways in which the learners need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in assessments: observe them, use of pictures, verbatim scribing, use of laptop	<p><i>"...you observe them, whatever question is, you say: "Ok, let's go, tell me what you do if you you do this and that and that?" Then they answer you, by doing that practical, so you write what you observe for that answer."</i> [Participant 5, p. 15]</p> <p><i>"So, when I write the report, I say, I was uh able to teach the learner and then the learner struggle to answer me but eh eventually managed to cut the picture to show me what is the components."</i>[Participant 5, p. 8]</p> <p><i>"...when she scribe for that learner, she must scribe exactly what is the learner saying, no on her way, not on high English, but exactly what's the learner saying."</i> [Participant 5, p. 8]</p> <p><i>"But the other one was not...didn't know how to write, so I was having a laptop for that one. So he was able to type it for me."</i> [Participant 5, p. 12]</p>
6	Spend individual time with the learners in class and assessing them individually	<p><i>"...so the one on one is very good because you know if you are going to concentrate on those learners who are active in class you will end up neglecting the others and also they will feel left out they will feel neglected, so I will ask them one by one and I will sit with them and also just try, if there is something that they don't understand I will also sit next to that person, try to explain to that person."</i> [Participant 2, p. 10]</p> <p><i>"for example when we needed to assess them you need you needed to assess them individually and umm we had oral assessments with them because we couldn't just get them a paper and say okay this your test write it and umm I'll you have two hours and then [laughs]"</i> [Participant 4, p. 10]</p>
7	Set goals with the learners in the beginning to use as a motivation	<p><i>"what I think also helped a lot was, in the beginning all the trainees that were selected to be part of this learnership, we stopped and we asked them what was their goal, their future plan, their their dream for themselves..."</i> [Participant 1, p. 12]</p>
8	Use spot tests to gauge their understanding	<p><i>"Ok, so I would do spot tests. So I used to do spot test, um, where I tell them, this week we are going to have a spot test, 'cos the thing is also they were very anxious so you needed to also consider that, you couldn't just spring things onto them. So, so I tell them, ok this week we gonna have a spot test only on 5 pages and from there I would be able to gauge."</i> [Participant 3, p. 6]</p>

9	Provide and teach the learners' compensation techniques	<i>"the most important thing was, that if you have chemicals and you need to measure it up, that you actually have a line that you can actually see the practical part of it, that you can actually know that if I must only throw detergents in at this point and that the rest needs to be water, I think that that can actually be, that can actually be done" [Participant 1, p. 6]</i>
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**Planning and evaluation strategies:** These describe what the learning facilitators did or wanted to do before and after the lessons to ensure that the teaching was appropriate for these learners with ID.

According to the learning facilitators, learnerships need to be facilitated over a longer time frame to accommodate for the learning needs of these learners.

*I think the course itself was a good course, um, I think maybe just the time constraints that was unfair, not the actual course, just the time constraints um, the learnership was for a year...can I say that? [laughs]...it was for a year but um, I think perhaps it should have been longer. Uh, it was extended at the end, uh, so that should've given them obviously an idea. [Participant 3, p. 4]*

They also found that there needed to be more time allocated before the learnership to prepare the learners before commencement as seen below:

*You know, before we can just, you know, sign on the dotted line for the learnership and said you know prepare all the stakeholders because it's not only about the bosses, the contracts, because the the people that will make that learnership a success is the learners and you need to accommodate those learners – you need to satisfy them, you need to prepare them because if you come to them with something that they're not used to they will freak out. [Participant 2, p. 16]*

It was important that learning facilitators spent time preparing their lessons beforehand in order to know how to adapt the materials. They often planned the lessons with their co-facilitator/s:

*...so then what we generally did umm...(job coach)<sup>3</sup> and us we will also then uh umm myse- myself (job coach)<sup>3</sup> and the other facilitator will we also come together and we think about okay what will be the best ways of doing this today and what will be the best ways of doing that today umm and so on so then we will umm you know talk to each other and say okay umm maybe we can have group work and maybe we can have umm you know umm ah practical demonstrations or whatever the case may be so so that is how our days were we there was a lot of interaction between us and we were we were talking all the time... [Participant 4, p. 9]*

Evaluating the lessons afterwards was also needed so they could identify what went well and how things may need to change for the next day. Evaluation also served as a debriefing for learning facilitators with other colleagues:

*...and I think that that for me was um, that one hour of talking to her and simplifying her, um simplifying the lesson and making more practical kind of visuals available, that was very very beneficial to her and then in the afternoon, just talking about some of the frustrations and also planning of the next day was also a big benefit. [Participant 1, p. 4]*

Learning facilitators who had more experience and knowledge in working with people with ID had to assist and train their co-facilitators who did not have as much experience:

*So I, i-i-it took, you know, me and the other fac- facilitator that was experienced with the intellectual, we had to educate those from the institutions: "Ok now, this is what we need to do, this is what we need to do." [Participant 2, p. 5]*

**Structural strategies:** These describe how the learning facilitators structured their classrooms and lessons in order to assist the learners with ID with their learning. Structural changes included the design of the classroom and the daily teaching programme, the learnership programme structure as well as some resources they found critical in assisting them to teach this group of learners and the learning atmosphere they had to create.

The classroom-based structures preferred by the learning facilitators differed. Some preferred a boardroom classroom set up; another preferred a lecture style set up while others found that a flexible classroom structure, where furniture that was movable

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<sup>3</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

allowing them to change the design as they needed, was the best option for them. Some of the learning facilitators found that they needed to create a separate area for the classroom as a dedicated space where the learners had their breaks as well as a small, private office for the learning facilitators to work in and have meetings.

*...so I separated that two areas because they wanted everything to be together, but I separated that and then obviously everybody that, you needed to go outside, out of your room to actually go out and go spend some time sitting outside. So kind of separating um, the one venue that we had into those smaller spaces. And, ya, and then I also had like one smaller room and if there was um, something that myself and (learning facilitator)<sup>4</sup> needed to discuss or whatever we had our private space that we could actually have, so it was a small room, a small room and we use that one as the kitchen now and that one as a little office for ourselves and the open space for the lecture thing. [Participant 1, p. 22]*

Some learning facilitators also organised the learners into smaller groups so the learners could support one another and placed stronger learners with others that needed more support so they could assist them.

It was important for the learning facilitators to create a classroom atmosphere that stimulated learning and was free of tension. This included the learning facilitators keeping their own feelings of frustration to themselves in front of the learners. Some learning facilitators found that they needed to personalise the learning environment for the learners:

*...we have pictures on the wall...all what we have done. Pictures on the wall, even the pictures of their self, I want the person's picture, you must bring your picture we want to see. Even my pictures too, I also put it on the wall. [Participant 5, p. 18]*

The learning facilitators made use of flipcharts and white boards, computers, parents to assist with homework tasks, and experienced co-learning facilitators (the job coaches from Organisation X). One participant felt strongly about the importance of the co-learning facilitators:

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<sup>4</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

*...I just think the coaches was a must it was a a necessary it was...um should've been there from the start...and it wasn't there from the start – I think [job coach]<sup>5</sup> I think my one colleague had one all the time she had [job coach]<sup>5</sup> all the time I think it was only later when...umm...I then I think I consulted with my supervisor and it was only then that they also gave me one, but I think it should've been there from the start...mmm and that's a a that's absolute must... [Participant 4, pp. 23–24]*

The structure of the daily teaching programme needed to be adjusted to accommodate the unique learning needs of learners with ID. The learning facilitators found that it was useful to give regular breaks throughout the day, alternate practical activities with theory lessons, structure more intense sessions in the mornings with the easier sessions in the afternoons, structure homework with a review session the next day and allocate more time for the learners to complete the assessments. The days and lesson had to be shortened with the content broken into smaller components as the learners could not always concentrate for the length of a full day.

*The sessions were never long. I think what we tried to do is we always have um, we have, the day itself wasn't long, so we start at ten and finish at three and then we'll have a little bit of a tea break and have a little bit of a lunch break between that time, so the day itself wasn't long, but, the sessions itself was short and also what we tried to do is a lot of little practical things afterwards, so you have a, I tried to encourage (College A)<sup>5</sup> facilitator to do lesson, activity, lesson, activity, lesson, activity and then obviously like um group work. [Participant 1, p. 20]*

One learning facilitator found that they had to adjust the time allocated for various subjects to suit the learning needs of the learners:

*...say it was communication and I could see everybody understood it, so then I said ok fine, we could do that instead of two weeks, in a week and then I had the numeracy one, it was supposed to be a week, but then we did two weeks. Ya, so that's what I did. [Participant 3, p. 11]*

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<sup>5</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

The learning facilitators also emphasised that learnerships need to be at the correct level for the learners' abilities so that you know they will be able to understand it and that you accommodate all the different learning needs of these individuals.

*...I think one needs to consider the level at which these learners are before you ...umm... I almost want to say it's ok if funding is there yes funding must be used but you can't just you know grab any ... any Tom and Harry and say ok here's a learnership here and now you know umm you need to you need to kind of like assess who is ... umm on that level for that particular for that particular umm learnership... [Participant 4, p. 5]*

It was clear that they felt that the numeracy and literacy components of a learnership were not suitable for these learners due to their disability. They also thought that it should be replaced with a life skills related module instead that would prove more useful to them:

*...when we say appropriate I think I think it was one particular aspect there...that was umm...I think there was one particular aspect within the learnership that was not appropriate at all and I think that was...that was the fundamentals...and when I talk about the fundamentals I'm talking about your numeracy and I'm talking about your literacy...so those are the core areas for you to gain a qualification...so um... and and...those fundamentals it adds up to your umm to the total...um for eh and you need to acquire that amount of credits for you to gain this this this qualification... and I think that was one ee- aspect that should never been included in that learnership. [Participant 4, p. 6]*

**Support strategies:** These describe the kinds of support that the learning facilitators accessed in order to cope with the teaching demands of the learnership. They made use of support persons available to them, some had access to practical / logistical supports in the form of different resources, and one adopted the habit of switching off from work at when she went home.

The support persons that the learning facilitators made use of were mostly from their supervisors and or managers, spouse and family members at home, co-learning facilitators, involved parents and or family members of the learners and enthusiastic learners.



*...from the general manager that time at (Organisation X)<sup>6</sup>, she was very supportive I must say, she was a very supportive woman, and you know she would encourage us, she will tell us: "I know this is not easy for you and I know this is what is happening, but, you know, I know you guys can do it, that is why I chose you to do this, I know you can do it" and sometimes you get frustrated and then you call her – this is what is happening, and then she will calm you down. You know, without putting pressure on you, that's what I love about her. [Participant 2, p. 15]*

*...when I when I chatted to them they were very excited to start the learnership because they've never done it before, they had no uh, formal training right? So they were very excited to start, so when you get any student that's excited to learn it it helps you, it definitely assists to facilitate people that are excited to want to learn. [Participant 3, p. 3]*

Practical or logistical supports included air conditioning, laptop to work on, training venues, transport, cell phones, mechanics to repair equipment, equipment and protective clothing ("PPC").

*...the equipment and things, I mean uh the tools that we need like I said the PPC, um, ya, and then all those things were put in place, we had transport that was taking us to (College A)<sup>6</sup>, um, um, everything was laid out, it was very comfortably put together, I think it was well thought through in terms of um, and if if I was needed I would um, sometimes there were some meetings that I needed to attend from (College A)<sup>6</sup> side or from (College B)<sup>6</sup> they would actually call us in and say, ok fine next week we'd like have to have a meeting and they'll make some time with us to kind of see what it is that we needed.. [Participant 1, p. 26]*

#### **4.3.3 Category three: Perceiving the 'just right' learnership**

These were the first learnerships that these learning facilitators had ever facilitated with learners that had ID. This new experience gave them insights and perspectives (conflicted, affirmative and impact on self) about the inclusion of this group of people in a learnership and how to tailor it to be 'just right' for their specific needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Pseudonym used for sake of confidentiality

**Conflicted perspectives:** Not all the learning facilitators believed that the learnership they were involved with did justice to their learners. They felt conflicted about the unreasonable expectations that had been placed on these learners as the learnership was too difficult for them. In trying to create a “just right” learnership, they as learning facilitators had to assist learners so much that the work was not entirely their own. They felt that the certificate that learners received from the SETA was not a true reflection of what they actually understood or were capable of. Being in possession of a certificate was not fair to the learners or future employers, doing them more harm than good because this created a false impression of competence. Some participants were ethically conflicted by their experience in this learnership, because of the disjunction between implied and actual competence. They felt that justice was not served for these learners and were not proud of having been involved:

*I felt a lot bad. Simplifying the work, yes we had to simplify the work, but we we had to literally assist them, assist them [emphasised], if you get what I'm saying now?*

*...but I feel from my personal opinion that if you, if content is there and there is a certificate then that is what you're supposed to be competent for and be able to do in the open labour market there. There's supposed to be a, um, I would think concrete, but there's supposed to be a a uniformity happening there, you know, but now, there's an open labour market and this is what they supposed to have been understanding fully [emphasised], get, grasping everything and if you have to take them and put them there with that information there wouldn't be a, there will be discrepancies and for me that is where the um, the unfairness, to me, the unfairness is coming in. That's not a true reflection of of that there so it's, what you've learned and what you've really understood should reflect there as well. But that is why material should be done on their level, it should be done on their level, that is for me fair, so so when they go out there whoever else would not take a things for granted: "Oh, cos they gone through this then they must understand" then it's gonna cause more damage to them there and we need to protect, of everything else, of everything for them is about protecting their self-worth. Because when they get a certificate whoever else will think: "Oh, they've gone through that, they're supposed to understand that". [Participant 6, pp. 9–10]*

There was also some doubt as to whether the learnerships are actually leading to better employment outcomes for these learners afterwards:

*And also, you know, there should be that monitoring and evaluation process that is taking place. Those learners attending the learnership right? Now, go back, what is happening to those learners, what happened to those learners? Are they practising whatever they done in the workplace? Are they employed, are they employable because of that learnership? Because it's no use for the learner to hop from one learnership to another, one learnership to another, it doesn't help. Where is the sustainability in that? That is not sustainable.” [Participant 2, p. 16]*

Even though there were conflicted perspectives held by some of the learning facilitators, there were also many supportive perspectives that were held about facilitating learnerships with people with ID.

**Affirmative perspectives:** Learning facilitators affirmed their experience in the learnerships and interactions with people with ID, finding them very satisfying and humbling. The learning facilitators formed a connection to the learners and expressed their concerns about people with ID being treated unfairly in society, facing stigma and being misunderstood.

*With this specific group, ok, so it's the first time that I, like I said earlier, it's the first time that I've dealt with people with intellectual disabilities, I think they are misunderstood. If you don't understand the disability I think it is misunderstood. For me it was very humbling to be able to facilitate these group, this group of people, um I think that they want to be treated as individuals as all of us and not be stigmatised because they have intellectual disability and I think people stigmatise, they are stigmatised. [Participant 3, p. 17]*

The learning facilitators thought that people with ID need to be heard and can achieve in the learnerships if the right support is provided.

*UCT Researcher: Do you think that with these um things in place that you've mentioned now, that learnerships can work with adults with intellectual disability and that they should be included in that space?*

*Participant 6: Without a doubt, without a doubt. Let me tell you why, um, their spirit of wanting to make a success, their determination, them wanting to come every day to class and sitting there and wanting to understand [laughs], you know their heart is there to want to, now obviously you feel it with them, for that reason, you know, they deserve a chance, that opportunity to and with the right tools and means, they, they can do it. [Participant 6, p. 3]*

They also thought that access to accredited training is a very positive opportunity for this group of learners and that the learners were engaged in the learning process to learn new skills and knowledge.

*...I think yes the learnership was good but I'm sure these learners learned so many things through it... [Participant 4, p. 5]*

**Perspectives about impact on self:** Learning facilitators found that the learnership had a negative personal impact on them as individuals. They found it a very tiring, frustrating, draining and intense process that was quite overwhelming at times. They were uncertain at first as they did not know what to expect and as time went by found that it was a harder task than they had anticipated. Some of the learning facilitators also felt that taking on the learnership was a burden and that they felt responsible for the learners and obligated to work hard at creating the “just right” curriculum.

*It was a draining, it was draining for all of us... [Participant 6, p. 8]*

*So my perception was...like I said, when I when I saw them I I was like, mmm, they seem normal enough like they'd understand what I'm saying, but in reality it wasn't as easy. It definitely was not as easy... [Participant 3, p. 3]*

There was a perception of being “thrown into the deep end” and left with the responsibility of having to push the learners through the learnership:

*...in the end when I had to step in, I was thrown in the deep end and had to do the, it was past the deadline, um, I had to just push them through basically. [Participant 6, p. 14]*

There was also a perspective that the learnership was a depressing experience and there was regret that they were involved in it:

*...their attention was there and in some way they were trying to ask questions and then you had to just explain, but it was just the content was just, it was depressing. It was...you now you taking me to a dark place [laughs]" [Participant 6, p. 12]*

Some learning facilitators chose and embraced the learnership teaching experience despite its many challenges

*...I was approached and asked whether I would like to um and um... because I've never I've never trained people with intellectual disabilities I said um okay it's an experience for me to so, so let me give it a go and see what, what are my experiences and how how it works....um and that was, that was why I decided...umm...to take on this class...and um i think for me it was quite a different experience. [Participant 4, p. 3]*

#### **4.4 Relationship of categories to the main theme**

The categories and sub-categories showed the challenges that learning facilitators faced when teaching learners with ID in a learnership programme, the strategies they used to teach these learners, and their perspectives about creating the "just right" learnership for learners with ID. These were all captured by the theme that emphasised that despite the demands that learnerships place on learning facilitators when working with learners with ID in a learnership programme to ensure that they are successful, these learners have the right to access accredited PSE such as a learnership programmes that are matched to their abilities.

## 4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the three categories forming the central theme as well as the twelve sub-categories were all explained. The theme, to which all the data pointed, emphasised that persons with ID have the right to further education even though it requires the learning facilitators to work hard in order to create the “just right” learnership. The *first* category represented the challenges that the learning facilitators faced when working with learners with ID; the *second* represented how they facilitated the learnerships, outlining the curriculum differentiation strategies they used to streamline the learning process; and the *third* category represented what their perspectives were regarding including learners with ID in learnerships. Within each category we see the various challenges experienced by the learning facilitators being explained as well as the strategies that were employed to navigate these learnerships and their different perspectives about the learnership context with learners with ID.

## CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to contribute towards the development of guidelines for the training of future learning facilitators on curriculum differentiation. The provision of such guidelines would ensure that learning facilitators have access to increased support during the implementation of learnerships. The theme revealed that teaching learnership programmes for adults with ID is time consuming and demanding on learning facilitators as many adjustments need to be made to accommodate the learners. The theme also revealed, however, that despite the effort required, these learning facilitators emphasise the rights of persons with ID to enter into learnerships in order for them to be equally included. In order to include learners with ID in a learnership programme, learning facilitators will need training on how to deal with adults with ID, how to streamline strategies for curriculum differentiation, and how to create the “just right” learnership for them. Each of these aspects of the theme and training-related focus areas for learning facilitators will now be discussed in relation to the literature.

### 5.2 The right of persons with intellectual disability to access learnership programmes

There are many policies in South Africa that relate to the rights of persons with disabilities to be included in all aspects of society, including post-school education opportunities such as learnership programmes (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013; Department of Social Development, 2015). Both the WPPSET (2013) and the WPRPD (2015) address the need for inclusive post-school education and acknowledge the many challenges that inclusion of persons with disabilities brings. The learning facilitators in this study were able to navigate their way through these challenges and see the positive impact that these post-school learning opportunities had on learners with ID. Even though they did not think that all learnerships are appropriate for learners with ID due to the academic requirements involved, they still felt that there are appropriate and suitable learnership opportunities that should include them, provided that the necessary accommodations and support systems are in place. Similarly, in the study by O'Connor et al. (2012), several lecturers indicated that learners with ID had a right to participate in inclusive education in PSE and that the learners would benefit from participating in the coursework. Some of them felt that their courses were introductory in nature, not requiring previous study in the

area, and therefore would be accessible and suitable for these learners (O'Connor, et al., 2012). Learners with ID have the right to access appropriate and suitable accredited PSE opportunities with the necessary support and adaptations.

### **5.3 Learnership programmes are time consuming and personally demanding**

Inclusion requires that learning facilitators change how they have traditionally taught in mainstream settings and that they shift their beliefs and values in order to provide education that is relevant for learners with different learning needs (Ntombela, 2011). However, not all learning facilitators are willing to change their teaching approaches to accommodate special learning needs (Moswela & Mukhopadhyay, 2011). The learning facilitators in this study, particularly those who were based at the post-school institutions and had not previously had any experience teaching learners with ID, found these learnerships with adults with ID to be very time consuming and placed personal demands on them. Similarly, Van Jaarsveldt and Ndeya-Ndereya (2015: 208) state that “many lecturers perceived students with disabilities to be a minority demanding extraordinary measures to ensure their academic success” and Sharma et al. (2006), found that including learners with disabilities in PSE could be perceived to impose additional demands on educators.

Some learning facilitators felt that they did not have a choice to participate in the learnership and one felt ethically challenged in that she felt she had to “push them through” due to the time constraints and pressure to complete. Van Jaarsveldt and Ndeya-Ndereya (2015) also found in their study that lecturers expressed concern that they were overcompensating for having students with disabilities in their classrooms and that these lecturers needed to find the balance.

Memisevic and Hodzic (2011) argued that the expectations placed on learning facilitators to meet all student needs and create solutions for any kind of problem in an inclusive classroom causes them to feel stressed and inadequate to support learners. Similarly, the learning facilitators in this study needed to put in much more time with the learners in the classroom due to their specific learning needs and related adaptations. The additional effort was stressful for them as they had to still complete the curriculum in the prescribed learnership timeframe – twelve months. Enormous pressure was placed on them by their supervisors / managers to ensure that these learnerships were completed and that the learners could achieve their best. This involved spending time adapting and modifying how



they planned and taught their lessons, which required more energy, creativity and planning than they were used to. They often made references to how much easier it was for them to teach learners who did not have ID on the same learnership programme. Memisevic and Hodzic (2011) found that teachers in their study found that differentiating the curriculum to suit each learner's needs created loads of administrative work and created pressure for them. O'Connor et al. (2012) stated, however, that many of the lecturers in their study with learners with ID who audited their courses felt driven and motivated by the desire to improve their instructional strategies in order to include all students with diverse learning needs.

Savvidou (2011) states that lack of support, access to information, consultation, recognition and acknowledgement are challenging for educators when including people with disability in higher education, leaving them feeling anxious, isolated and uncertain. The learning facilitators in this research study had mixed experiences when it came to receiving support and understanding from their managers or supervisors as well as from the workplace managers/mentors supporting the learners. While some felt they had been very well supported by their managers, others felt that they had not been adequately supported and that there had been no understanding or recognition of the many challenges they were facing in facilitating this group of learners. Although issues of support need to be dealt with at the training provider level to ensure learning facilitators receive the support they need for inclusion, learning facilitators also need to be trained on how to cope in environments that offer less support than needed.

The literature and the findings of this study indicate that while learners with ID have the right to be included in learnerships, more training, support, assistance and appropriate learning materials need to be in place for the learning facilitators in future learnerships to decrease the burden and pressure of creating the "just right" learnership.

#### **5.4 Constructing training programmes for learning facilitators on teaching learnerships with adults with intellectual disability in post-school settings**

Faculty staff that have not had training on disability-related matters and on how to provide adequate support to their students present a huge barrier to students with disabilities in PSE (Diez, et al., 2015). Diez, et al. (2015) found that the inadequate training of faculty staff was more likely a barrier to learners with disability than inappropriate attitudes towards

these learners. They recommend that “universities incorporate specific training in working with students with disabilities into existing faculty programmes.” (Diez, et al., 2015: 156). In this research study, learning facilitators with more experience and knowledge working with people with ID had to assist and train those without this experience in order for the learners to benefit from their input. Nel et al. (2011) found that educators do not have adequate knowledge and skills to adapt curriculum to support learners with barriers to learning and have not been trained to teach learners with diverse learning needs. This training should ideally begin at undergraduate level as faculty staff members have shown better attitudes towards inclusion if they have attended schools / universities in recent years where courses on the disability inclusion movement have just begun (Abu-Hamour, 2013).

In fulfilling its purpose, this study on how learning facilitators taught adults with ID in these three learnership programmes has provided valuable insights and information into what needs to be included in a curriculum for a training programme for learning facilitators on how to teach adults with ID. The three categories under the theme will allow us to focus on the following aspects in constructing this curriculum, viz. “dealing with people with intellectual disability”, “how to streamline strategies for teaching” and “how to create the ‘just right’ learnership”. These are explored in more detail below.

#### **5.4.1 Dealing with people with intellectual disability**

Learning facilitators in this study expressed the different challenges they faced in dealing with ID during these learnerships. These challenging aspects of working with adults with ID in a learnership programme need to be included in a training programme for learning facilitators in order to prepare them as educators of persons with special learning needs.

The literature identifies how difficult it is for educators to manage challenging behaviour of learners with different learning needs (Yeo, et al., 2014). Yeo et al. (2014: 11) reported that “teachers experienced fear and anxiety from working with children with challenging behaviours”. In this research study, although most of the learning facilitators felt that the learners were eager to learn and were mostly cooperative, they also found learner-related challenges where the learners demonstrated immature behaviour, low levels of endurance, low confidence in themselves, and limited life skills. These behaviours and qualities posed a challenge for the learning facilitators to manage and deal with, even though they didn’t evoke fear and anxiety as found in the study by Yeo et al. (2014) as there was no aggressive or overtly disruptive behaviours reported by these learning facilitators. A few of the

learning facilitators in this study also had limited to no experience working with people with ID, which made it a challenge for them to understand the disability and their learning needs. Diez, et al. (2015: 156) concurred, stating that “a general finding in all the fields of knowledge has been the lack of training of lecturers to adequately attend disabled students, and the need to rectify this”. Correct handling skills and understanding ID are critical aspects to teach learning facilitators so they can understand this group of learners’ needs better in order to teach them effectively.

Yeo et al. (2014) also found that educators experience instructional challenges when teaching the prescribed curriculum to people with diverse learning needs. Learner-related challenges faced by the learning facilitators in this study included certain cognitive limitations of the learners with ID, namely low concentration levels, limited memory abilities, low literacy and numeracy levels, slower learning pace, poor communication skills, and limited ability to grasp abstract concepts. The low literacy and numeracy levels of persons with ID are a particular challenge when it comes to the literacy and numeracy components of the qualification. Dalton et al. (2012) and Rose and Gravel (n.d.) provided recommendations for universal design; however, the unique needs of persons with ID has received limited clarification in the literature. Training how to negotiate some of these challenges and provide compensations for them is critical for inclusion in a course for learning facilitators. In addition, there needs to be more advocacy for learnerships qualifications not to require literacy and numeracy assessment for adults with ID in favour of more useful and achievable qualification components such as life skills.

One of the largest challenges faced by the learning facilitators in the research study was the actual learnership programme structure, including the curriculum and assessment methods. Howell (2006) reported similarly that inflexible curriculum further marginalises learners with disabilities in South African higher education institutions and that the nature of assessment practices, methods and materials of teaching, and the way in which classes and learning are managed, are barriers to equitable participation of learners with disabilities. The learning facilitators in this study had to learn ‘on-the-job’ how to adapt the curriculum and assessment methods to ensure that learners could understand, and provide the information needed and work out creative ways to ensure the learnerships were completed within the timeframe allocated. The insights drawn from these learning facilitators need to be integrated into a training programme for other learning facilitators.

Educators in South Africa experience significant barriers to including learners with disability in their classrooms as they lack teaching aids, equipment and administrative and financial support from their district offices (Engelbrecht, et al., 2015). Similarly, the learning facilitators in this study indicated logistical and practical challenges relating to limited resources provided by the colleges, as well as lack of support from the higher structures governing the timeous payment of stipends to the learners, which was highly demotivating for the learners and challenging for the learning facilitators to manage. They also experienced that the administrative expectations in terms of paperwork and procedures to be a burden in an already time-pressured process.

#### 5.4.2 Streamlining strategies

The aspects of the curriculum in each learnership that were considered and included in this study were: the content, the language of instruction, how the classroom was managed or organised, the teaching methods and processes, the pace of teaching, the time available to complete the curriculum, the learning materials and equipment that were used and how the learning was assessed (Department of Education, 2001). Each of these aspects was addressed by the learning facilitators when describing how they differentiated the curriculum for the learners with ID. Even though they were not responsible for writing the learnership curriculum as this was provided for them and prescribed, they had to adapt aspects of it in order to assist the learners to understand through simplification and summarising of key points for example.

With curriculum being the most significant barrier to learning in the inclusive education system in SA, it is critical that learning facilitators are taught on how to differentiate the curriculum to suit diverse learning needs in the classroom (Nel, et al., 2011; Department of Education, 2001). The learning facilitators used various strategies to differentiate the curriculum so that the learners could engage better with it and learn.

The learning facilitators in this study were able to identify several curriculum differentiation strategies that they used during these learnerships that assisted them in teaching learners with ID. These strategies were categorised into five sub-categories of strategies that are discussed below with reference to literature. Three of the sub-categories identified have been populated into the UDL Framework (Appendix I), a framework that outlines guidelines and principles for curriculum design and delivery that aim to reduce barriers to learning (Dalton, et al., 2012). The other three sub-categories are discussed below separately.

#### **5.4.2.1 Communication, practical and structural strategies**

Most of the communication, practical and structural strategies used by the learning facilitators in this study were populated into the three UDL Framework principles, viz. “Multiple means of representation”, “Multiple means of action and expression” and “Multiple means of engagement” (refer to Appendix I) as they aligned well with these principles. These learning facilitators seemed to have intuitively aligned their curriculum differentiation strategies with the three principles outlined in the framework as each principle was represented. There were, however, some guidelines within each strategy that the learning facilitators did not use as a strategy as they may not have had the resources to do so (for example access to digital training materials to adapt formatting electronically) or it was not necessary as the learners did not require it (use of Braille or sign language interpreter for example).

**Table 7 – UDL Framework principles (Rose & Gravel, n.d.)**

<b>Multiple means of representation</b> (the means by which information is presented to the learners)
<p>The three UDL guidelines (providing options for perception, language and symbols, and comprehension) were all populated with the strategies used by the learning facilitators to assist the learners with ID to understand the inaccessible learning materials (text-heavy with jargon) and teaching methods proposed by the prescribed curriculum (for example, learners needing to spend time reading through the materials independently).</p> <p>These strategies included using the learner’s mother tongue, a range of different visuals (the actual items, roleplays, pictures, drawings, activities etc.) and simplification of the language and jargon that were too complex. It was also critical to use practical demonstrations wherever possible with concrete examples and thorough explanations to ensure that the message was understood and remembered. Summarising the key outcomes of the curriculum also assisted the learners to comprehend the essence of the curriculum. Providing homework as well as repetition assisted the learners to remember what was taught. The assessment questions needed to be adapted to allow the learners to comprehend what they were asking, for example, rephrasing, using prompts and re-structuring into multiple-choice questions.</p>

**Multiple means of action and expression**

(the means by which the learner is required to demonstrate what they know)

This UDL principle and three guidelines (providing options for physical action; expressive skills and fluency; and executive functions) provide learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in different ways and practice tasks with different levels of support (Dalton, et al., 2012). The learning facilitators were able to ensure that the learners were able to express their understanding in different ways, as many of them could not read or write. The strategies used involved allowing the learners to demonstrate their understanding in multiple ways besides writing; so, for example, they could draw or cut out a picture or photo to demonstrate their understanding, verbally respond and have someone transcribe for them, practically demonstrate their knowledge, or use a laptop to type as one learner did.

This principle also speaks about how learning facilitators need to provide options for executive functions by expanding lower-level skills and scaffolding higher-level skills (Rose & Gravel, n.d.). The learning facilitators in this study were able to work on higher-level skills through encouraging goal-setting at the beginning of the learnership, using spot tests to gauge understanding, and providing learners with compensation techniques such as drawing markers on the measuring cup where a liquid needs to be poured to instead of the learner having to cope with the challenge of reading the numbers.

This principle and guidelines, however, require significant more specific strategies to be implemented in order to improve executive function that was not focused on in this study by any of the learning facilitators.

**Multiple means of engagement**

(the means by which students are engaged in learning and stay motivated)

The three UDL guidelines of providing options for recruiting interest, sustaining effort and persistence, and self-regulation, were all populated and reflect that the learning facilitators in this study invested much effort in gaining and maintaining the interest levels of the learners and motivating them when it became too challenging. They had to recruit interest by ensuring that the environment was conducive for learning by personalising it and creating a tension-free environment in the manner they facilitated the learning and through the support they provided, even when they were under pressure. They established good relationships with the learners of mutual trust and respect and got to know them so that they could better respond to their learning needs and make the learning relevant. It was important to prepare the learners in advance for what was happening next in the teaching programme and be transparent to reduce anxiety in the learners.

To gain their attention they used humour and made the lessons fun, shortened the teaching programme and lessons, alternated activities with theory lessons, and taught more challenging lessons in the mornings rather than in the afternoons. To foster collaboration and interactions they used small groups of learners to work together and assist one another. They also ensured that the learners actively participated in the class by requesting their feedback and responses and by requesting feedback from the learners.

The college-based learning facilitators also utilised the support from the job coach learning facilitators from Organisation X to assist them and the learners' parents.

Digital media and technology are being used a lot more by educators over the years to differentiate curriculum as it allows them the flexibility that print media does not (Meyer & Rose, 2005). Even though the UDL guidelines provide multiple options and suggestions requiring digital media and technology, the type of adaptations that were made in this study were mostly low- or no-technology options (white boards, for example) as there were very limited resources to provide laptops for each learner or to use interactive whiteboards, data projectors and so on that would have assisted in customising the content to reduce learning barriers further (Meyer & Rose, 2005). Low- or no-technology

options can also achieve similar outcomes when using the UDL framework principles and guidelines, which is what these learning facilitators did in this study (Dalton, et al., 2012). We need to also remember that the UDL Framework is meant for learning facilitators and educators to provide for the widest range of diverse learning needs to accommodate any learner. These learnership learners all had ID so the college-based learning facilitators in this study could streamline their strategies to suit their needs, even though these needs were diverse in themselves and very different to what they are used to at their respective colleges.

Nel et al. (2011) also found these same communication, practical and structural strategies useful when educating people with ID, namely using practical, hands-on, experiential learning activities, continuous interaction between educator and learner, breaking up lessons into manageable steps, and using repetition, visual aids and stimulation as well as verbalisation. O'Connor et al. (2012) used visual imagery, question-and-answer sessions, small-group discussions and practical or interactive sessions, all used by the learning facilitators in this study as useful curriculum differentiation strategies. O'Connor et al. (2012) also made use of PowerPoint presentations to motivate their students, which some of the learning facilitators in this study expressed that they wished they could have used in these learnerships as they could see the value in this form of visual input for reducing barriers to learning.

Kurth (2013) indicated that adaptations to curriculum can be generally applied to all learners and the classroom activities or specifically to particular learners and lessons or activities. Even though the learning facilitators in this study made adaptations that benefited all the learners, as discussed above, they also found that they had to spend individual time with the learners in the class and assess learners individually as a strategy to assist them with their unique learning needs. Although this took time, they felt it necessary to do in order for them to learn and understand.

#### ***5.4.2.2 Planning and evaluation strategies***

There were other strategies that were employed by learning facilitators in this study that are not overtly outlined in the UDL framework discussed above. These were the planning and evaluation as well as support strategies that were very useful in assisting the learning facilitators with the curriculum differentiation process during these learnerships. These strategies are an important part of being able to implement the UDL, even though they are not outlined in the UDL as separate guidelines.



The planning and evaluation strategies addressed the following main aspects, namely:

- Planning the lessons beforehand, preferably with a co-learning facilitator, enables the learning facilitator to make the necessary adaptations and prepare the lesson activities and materials;
- Conducting an evaluation process after each day serves as a means to determine what went well and what needs to change going forward, as well as to debrief with a colleague as a form of support; and
- Utilising the experience and knowledge of colleagues who have prior experience and knowledge in working with people with intellectual disability and can provide vital insights and assistance.

#### ***5.4.2.3 Support strategies***

The support strategies that learning facilitators employed during these learnerships mostly included the utilisation of support persons available to them and practical or logistical supports in the form of different resources. This finding supports Donohue and Bornman (2015) who found that the provision of support such as support staff and resources appears to be a critical contributor towards inclusion. They found that resources and supports in the form of assistive devices, instructional materials, computers, personal assistants, and extra training for educators were what they needed to facilitate inclusion (Donohue & Bornman, 2015). Similarly, the learning facilitators in this study indicated that they found the following practical or logistical supports very useful to assist them with their teaching: namely co-learning facilitators, training equipment items, and assistive devices such as a laptop for a learner who could not write. Yeo et al. (2014) recommended that training educators in inclusive education should provide them with the opportunity to teach alongside a colleague who has been trained in special needs and intervention in order for them to observe effective support first hand. The learning facilitators in this study, particularly those based at the colleges, all expressed how critical their co-learning facilitators (job coaches) from Organisation X were in supporting them in the classroom as they could draw on prior experience in working with people with ID. They learned from watching how they interacted with the learners and were able to debrief together after the lessons to unpack what went well and what needed to change going forward. It is therefore important to integrate the concept of teaching alongside an experienced learning facilitator or at least observing them in practice as part of a training programme for learning facilitators on how to teach adults with ID.

The learning facilitators also benefited from additional supports not found in the literature, such as the provision of transport for them to the training venues and of cell phones for communication, as well as the support of persons that include their spouses, family members, supervisors, managers, parents of learners and enthusiastic learners.

#### 5.4.3 Creating the 'just right' learnership

The perspectives of learning facilitators in this study towards including adults with ID within learnerships and how to tailor learnerships to be 'just right' for their learning needs were categorised into three sub-categories, viz. conflicted, affirmative and impact on self. Their insights and perspectives should be examined in order for us to ensure that learnership programmes are more tailored to the needs of these learners and that training programmes for learning facilitators are appropriate. As PSE systems become more inclusive in response to legislative requirements, learning facilitators will need professional development to equip them with appropriate skills, attitudes, knowledge and values to ensure that they can learn how to provide quality education (Ntombela, 2011).

Unlike the literature examined where there were many negative perspectives and resistance from educators and lectures regarding the inclusion of people with ID or disability in PSE or in mainstream schools (Moswela & Mukhopadhyay, 2011; Diez, et al., 2015; Donohue & Bornman, 2015; Thombela, 2011; Thaver & Lim, 2014), most of these learning facilitators affirmed their experience in these learnerships and feel that access to accredited training is a positive opportunity for this group of people. They found the experience to be very satisfying and were humbled to be a part of the learnerships; they endorsed the right of persons with ID to access accredited training, but only when learners with ID are afforded the right support so that they can succeed. Similarly, O'Connor et al. (2012) found that lecturers at a college in Dublin also had positive interactions with learners with ID, experienced teaching them as personally satisfying, and worked on their teaching strategies to accommodate a variety of learning needs. The learning facilitators in this study also felt that people with ID are treated unfairly in society and that they need to be understood and listened to more in order to reduce barriers to learning.

Dotger (2011) found in her study on inclusion in higher education that the gestalt responses towards learners with disability present a challenge to change and are barriers for the full participation of all learners in education settings. Awareness about disability and viewing learners with disability as people first changes these gestalt responses, as does training on how to implement principles of universal design or learner-centred instruction

(Dotger, 2011). Although the learning facilitators in this study did not receive training on how to implement these principles before these learnerships, they were engaged in an ongoing process of on-the-job training and learning in the classroom. The previous experience of learning facilitators at Organisation X working with people with ID and willing attitudes from all the learning facilitators may have influenced any gestalt responses that may have existed and resulted in the positive perspectives that they had towards these learners.

Not all learning facilitators in this study, however, felt that the learnership they were involved in did justice to these learners with ID. Some felt that unreasonable expectations had been placed on the learners with the level of difficulty of the programme and that they as learning facilitators had to provide more assistance than they should have in order for them to create the “just-right” learnership. They felt there was a disjunction between their implied and actual competence levels and that this was unfair to future employers and to the learners who had a certificate that does not truly reflect what they can do. They were also conflicted as to whether these learnerships assist these learners in becoming employed.

These negative perspectives were unlike those found in the literature reviewed that mostly revealed an unwillingness to change teaching approaches to accommodate learners (Moswela & Mukhopadhyay, 2011), low expectations of their learning ability resulting in insufficient instruction (Donohue & Bornman, 2015), viewing curriculum adaptations as favouritism (Diez, et al., 2015), prejudice against people with invisible disabilities such as ID (Diez, et al., 2015), and believing that persons with disabilities are best served in separate, special educational settings (Thaver & Lim, 2014; Ntombela, 2011). The learning facilitators in this study were more concerned with how the inflexible structure of the learnership placed unreasonable demands on the learners with ID and themselves, forcing the facilitators to compromise the integrity of the learning process.

It is important that learnership structures are adapted in order to accommodate learners with ID and to assist their learning facilitators in helping them navigate the curriculum. This would include providing more time to complete and time to prepare, adjusting the level of complexity of the materials, adapting the training materials, providing a support facilitator in class, providing a support system for debriefing and guiding the learning facilitator, and ensuring correct matching of the learners’ abilities to the level of the learnership. Training programmes to prepare learning facilitators to create the “just right” learnership need to

include instruction on understanding ID, curriculum differentiation and handling skills of persons with ID, including practical hands-on experience working with persons with ID with support.

## 5.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the right of persons with ID to access learnership programmes and the reality that these programmes are time consuming and personally demanding for the learning facilitators who engage in them with this group of learners. It also discussed the construction of a training programme for learning facilitators on teaching learnerships with adults with ID in post-school settings. This training programme needs to include aspects of how to deal with persons with ID in a learnership, what strategies need to be streamlined in order to differentiate the curriculum, and how to create the 'just right' learnership. The following and final chapter provides recommendations going forward from this research and concluding statements.

## CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Introduction

In conclusion, this chapter revisits the researcher's assumptions in order to verify the plausibility of the findings. It also addresses recommendations before commenting on the study limitations and making a final conclusion about the research question.

### 6.2 Researcher assumptions

The researcher began this research process with a number of assumptions (see 3.2). All these assumptions were affirmed as the findings showed that the learning facilitators in this study employed at the PSE colleges had no prior experience in working with learners with ID in their class. They often required the assistance of the learning facilitators employed at Organisation X in order to understand the learners' needs and relied heavily on their guidance when it came to differentiating the curriculum. They also all experienced many challenges, many relating to the difficulty they had navigating the learners through the accredited curriculum.

### 6.3 Recommendations for Organisation X and partnering PSE institutions

#### 6.3.1 Recommendation one: Advocacy

There is a need for Organisation X to advocate for the needs of adults with ID to be able to access and participate in learnership programmes. Currently there are no learnership programmes in South Africa that are structured in a way that can accommodate for these learners without many challenges facing learning facilitators and training providers, and possible compromises to the integrity of the programme. The advocacy action needs to centre around curriculum development and the need for monitoring bodies to remove the main barriers to these learners obtaining a full learnership qualification. This would include revising the literacy and numeracy modules that are compulsory components and replacing them with modules more appropriate, relevant and achievable for this population group, namely modules on life skills and open labour market preparedness skills. Another important recommendation is to advocate for longer time for these learners to complete the learnership, as the twelve-month maximum timeframe does not provide them with enough time and provides a barrier to their completing it on their own merit.

Organisation X also needs to advocate to the PSE institutions, the training providers in these learnerships, to ensure that their training materials are more accessible for these learners and their learning facilitators are adequately trained and prepared before they commence.

### **6.3.2 Recommendation two: Training programme for learning facilitators**

Organisation X can utilise the findings of this study to compile a training programme for learning facilitators involved in providing training in a PSE context with adults with ID to equip and upskill them to teach effectively and know how to negotiate the challenges and differentiate the curriculum. This curriculum will need to include the following: dealing with ID (understanding ID and using appropriate handling skills), strategies to use to differentiate the curriculum, how to resolve possible challenges, and practical experience with adults with ID in a teaching context.

## **6.4 Recommendations for future research**

### **6.4.1 Navigating a learnership programme as a learner with ID**

One important aspect needing further study is to ask learners who have been on a learnership programme to provide their perspectives on their experience and what they deem were challenges for them, the supports they required, and how they engaged the process of learning in a structured and accredited framework. Answering these research questions would provide insights into learnership programmes from the perspective of persons with ID and enrich the learning facilitator training programme curriculum.

### **6.4.2 The impact of a training programme on inclusion for learning facilitators**

A further study on the impact of a training programme for learning facilitators on the inclusion of learners with ID in a learnership is needed to determine the efficacy of such a programme on how they implement curriculum differentiation strategies, negotiate possible challenges, and cultivate positive perspectives about learners with ID in learnerships.

## **6.5 Limitations of the study**

Very few learnerships, if any, have been undertaken in the South African context with adults with ID. Learnerships as we know them in South Africa do not exist internationally. This made finding appropriate literature a challenge. However, there were similarities

found in literature regarding educators in schools and lecturers in PSE institutions teaching persons with ID and disability and their perspectives challenges and differentiation strategies, making the literature applicable to learnership programmes.

These learning facilitators were involved in this study from three to five years ago and this time lapse could have influenced their recall of events and their experiences. While they were being interviewed, some made comments that the experience of teaching in the learnership had been quite a long time ago, but that the researcher was taking them back to this time through the questions and they seemed to be recalling more as the interviews went along.

The study did not include all the participants: one participant could not be sourced. Generalisation of the data to all the participants is therefore not possible.

## 6.6 Conclusion of the study

Learning facilitators face many personal, structural and educational challenges while navigating their way through post-school learnerships for adults with ID. Despite these challenges, they believe that learners with ID have the right to access PSE education and participate in learnerships. They argue that the success of post-school learnerships lies in providing the “just right” curriculum that offers support for both educator and learner.

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## **APPENDICES A to I**

## Appendix A: Information letter

Introduction: Dear Learning facilitator

My name is Taryn Feinberg and I am an Occupational Therapist doing my Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy at UCT. I need to complete a research assignment as part of the degree.

The research is being done to identify challenges faced by learning facilitators when training adults with intellectual disability (ID) in a post-school institution and strategies they employed in overcoming these challenges.

The title of the research is: **How learning facilitators teach adults with mild and moderate intellectual disability in learnership programmes at post-school institutions in Cape Town: A descriptive qualitative study.**

The purpose of this study is to gain insights from you, the learning facilitators who have worked or are still working with adults with ID in post-school institutions; regarding how you taught adults with ID in the learnership programme that you were involved in with (Organisation X)<sup>7</sup>. The findings of this study will provide information on teaching methods used to teach this group of adults as and assessments methods that are used to enable these adults to demonstrate their knowledge. The findings will be used to determine the support that post-school learning facilitators receive and to inform training programmes to empower learning facilitators to be able to work with adults with ID in post-school institutions. It is essential for us to get your input, as very few learning facilitators teach adults with ID in post-school institutions in Cape Town.

The research process will require you to participate in 1-to-2 interviews for about 60 minutes each with the researcher. The interview will take place at a location that is most convenient to you and at a time most convenient to you. The interviews will take place over a 2 month period in 2017, from March – April 2017.

Your practice as a learning facilitator in the learnership/s you were involved in and your perceptions of challenges you faces, perspectives you had, strategies you used and support you required during the learnership/s will be discussed. There are no right or wrong answers. These interviews will be recorded with your permission using a tape recorder.

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<sup>7</sup> Pseudonym used for the sake of confidentiality

You will be asked to give feedback on the recorded findings from the interviews to make sure that the information that was gathered is a correct representation of what was discussed.

The information will be analysed to determine what challenges you faced, what teaching methods you used to teach this group of learners, what assessment methods were used to enable the learners to demonstrate their knowledge, what your perceptions are regarding the learnerships with this group of adults and what your support needs were during the learnership. Feedback will be made available to post-school institutions so that the way adults with ID are included can be improved in the future.

The information will only be used for the specific current research project, and will possibly be published. If there is an intention to use the information for any other purpose, then additional consent will need to be obtained from you, and further ethics approval will need to be obtained.

The benefit to you as a participant will be the opportunity to reflect on the teaching with adults with mild and moderate ID and knowing that you are adding value by assisting future learning facilitators working with adult learners with special needs. This will therefore benefit adults with ID by making post-school institutions more inclusive towards them and more able to meet their learning needs. There will be no financial incentive to participate in these interviews. If during the discussion it becomes apparent that you will benefit from debriefing, counselling or other social or medical intervention, then such referral process will be discussed with you, and should you agree to it, the referral made to the most appropriate source of such a service, namely Cape Mental Health (021 447 9040).

The interview will require you to share your experiences with the researcher. The researcher is a professional person who has experience in conducting interviews, and will at all times facilitate discussion that will not cause embarrassment, distress or other harm to you. All your input will be treated with respect.

All discussions will be confidential. This means that your name will not be linked to any of the data when the data is recorded. There will only be an interest in the content of the information. The recordings will be erased as soon as the necessary capturing of information is completed. Although every effort will be made to keep your identities and the organisation that you and the researcher work for confidential, please note that there is still a risk that these may be evident to some people who read the findings.



Any travelling costs to get to and from the venue will be reimbursed. No deductions from your salary will be made for participation in the research.

There is no obligation whatsoever to participate in the study. There will also be no penalties for not participating. You also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no repercussions to you. You do not need to provide any reasons for withdrawing from the study. All participation in the study is voluntary, and no insurance/compensation is available in the case of injury.

You are warmly invited to participate in this research. Your input will be highly valued as you can make a vital contribution to improved understanding of the challenges faced in the inclusion of adults with ID in post-school institutions to the benefit of adults with ID in post-school institutions and other learning facilitators in the Western Cape Province.

You may also contact my supervisor, A/Professor Madie Duncan (021 XXXXXXX) or Dr Judith McKenzie (021 XXXXXXX) at any time should you have any questions.

The chairperson of the UCT FHS Human Research Ethics Committee, Associate Professor Marc Blockman, can also be contacted on 021 406 6496 in case you have any questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research subject in this study.

The researcher's contact details should you have any questions are:

Work: 021 XXXXXXX

Cell: 072 XXXXXXX

Email: XXXXXXX@myuct.ac.za

Please sign and return the informed consent form included with this letter should you wish you participate and send it back to me.

My workplace is: XXXXXXX.

Thank you in anticipation.

Taryn Feinberg

UCT Masters Student: Occupational Therapy

## Appendix B: Informed consent form

### Informed Consent Form

Consent form:

Research Study: How learning facilitators teach adults with mild and moderate intellectual disability in learnership programmes at post-school institutions in Cape Town: A descriptive qualitative study

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read (or had read to me by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_) the information sheet regarding this research study. I understand what is required of me and I have had all my questions answered. I do not feel that I am forced to take part in this study and I am doing so of my own free will. I know that I can withdraw at any time if I so wish and that it will have no bad consequences for me.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date and place

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date and place

## Appendix C: Interview questions

### Demographics:

1. How long have/did you worked at this post-school institution?
2. How would you describe your level experience in teaching adults with mild and moderate ID?
3. When you teaching adults with ID in the learnership/s, how many on average were included per course?

### Perspectives:

4. Please describe what your perceptions about teaching adults with ID in a learnership context.
5. UDL Principle 1: Providing multiple means of representation:

Please describe how you facilitated a typical session in this learnership for the learners with ID.

#### Probes:

- 5.1. What teaching methodologies did you use to help the learners understand the curriculum? How were these different to the usual methodologies you use?
- 5.2. How did you use technology or teaching tools/equipment?
- 5.3. How did you adapt/modify the content of the curriculum in order for the learners to understand?
6. UDL Principle 2: Providing multiple means of action and expression:
  - 6.1. Please describe how you gauged their understanding of what taught.
  - 6.2. Can you take me through the assessments used in the learnerships, explaining the adaptations/changes you have made in order to ensure that it is appropriate for the learners?

7. UDL Principles 3: Providing multiple means of engagement:

- 7.1. Please describe how you were able to gain the attention and interest of the learners in a typical session.
- 7.2. Please describe how you structured the learning environmental, including any changes and adaptations made, during the learnership.

Learning Facilitator Support:

8. What supported you when you were training the adults with ID in the learnership?

Challenges:

9. Please describe the challenges involved in teaching adults with mild and moderate ID in the learnership.
10. What solutions did you find to overcome these challenges?

## Appendix D: Participant Information Form

### Participant Information Form

### UCT Master's Thesis Research Study

Please complete the following form with your details. Your name and details will be kept confidential and protected.

	Participant Details	Response
1	Your full name	
2	Your chosen pseudonym	
3	Your birth date (dd/mm/yy)	
4	Gender	
5	What are your qualifications?	
6	Where do you currently work?	
7	What is your job title?	
8	What is your work history?	

Thank you for your participation.

Kind regards,

Taryn Feinberg

072 248 9899

## Appendix E: Ethics Approval

 <b>UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN</b> <b>Faculty of Health Sciences</b> <b>Human Research Ethics Committee</b>	 Room E53-46 Old Main Building Groot Schuur Hospital Observatory 7925 Telephone (021) 405 6492 Email: <a href="mailto:suneyah.arietdian@uct.ac.za">suneyah.arietdian@uct.ac.za</a> Website: <a href="http://www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms">www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms</a>
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05 February 2017

**HREC REF: 007/2017**

**A/Prof E Duncan**  
Department of Health & Rehab Sciences  
F-45  
OMB

Dear A/Prof Duncan

**PROJECT TITLE: HOW LEARNING FACILITATORS TRAIN ADULTS WITH MILD AND MODERATE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMMES AT POST-SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS IN CAPE TOWN: A DESCRIPTIVE QUALITATIVE STUDY (MSc candidate- Ms TL Feinberg)**

Thank you for submitting your study to the Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for review.

It is a pleasure to inform you that the HREC has **formally approved** the above-mentioned study.

**Approval is granted for one year until the 28 FEBRUARY 2018.**

Please submit a progress form, using the standardised Annual Report Form if the study continues beyond the approval period. Please submit a Standard Closure form if the study is completed within the approval period.  
(Forms can be found on our website: [www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms](http://www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms))

***We acknowledge that the student, T Feinberg will also be involved in this study.***

**Please quote the HREC REF in all your correspondence.**

Please note that the ongoing ethical conduct of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

Please note that for all studies approved by the HREC, the principal investigator **must** obtain appropriate institutional approval before the research may occur.

Yours sincerely

  
**PROFESSOR M. BLOCKMAN**  
**CHAIRPERSON, FHS HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Federal Wide Assurance Number: FWA00001637.

HREC 007/2017

## Appendix F: Example of transcription with codes highlighted

dedoose  
Qualitative Research Made Easy

Document: First interview, Victoria.docx

Selection Info

First interview, Victoria.docx (...)

Perceptions and attitudes...

More learner preparation...

Codes

Challenges

Abstract curriculum

Allowed to adjust theory, not practical ...

Alot of reading material, no visuals

Co-facilitator's frustration

Cognitive limitations of learners

Complexity of curriculum

Consistency of some words relevant to

Victoria: Um...the challenges that i faced was...the training itself because we were called facilitators you know what i mean, so it's difficult to facilitate with someone that doesn't have an experience, you know who's experiencing training people with intellec, with intellectual disability for the first time. So, there is that fluctuation in terms of emotions, so, you know and also...as a facilitator you have to be flexible, you know, you have to...to see everything that has to do with the training itself. Let's say, ok now, if you can do it this way, then the training will be more understandable to them, and uh you know the most difficult part for me was when the learners could not take it anymore, some of the learners said: "Ok now, this is too difficult for me, i can't take...i'm going to quit". So now you trying to, you know, to encourage the learners not to leave and also to...to convince them that this is good for them and i think what we need to do as well, when, because of the time because now these learnership they come and then immediately we need to, they need to undergo this particular learnership and then there's no time for anything and they need good preparations. They need, you know, before they can go for a learnership, for that particular learnership, they need to be prepared. They need to be mental prepared, because it's something new to them, you know, even the words that are being used, even the experience itself because, remember that, in that institution there were mixed with people that are not disabled and the most difficult time as well was when some of them were teasing the learners, you know, and then you trying to comfort the learner and encourage the learner not to quit and at the same time you trying to explain the reason why it is good for the learner to attend the learnership, the learnership itself. So, i think that was a bit difficult for me because now it was not only 1 issue that was taking place, it was eh many issues, because there were staff that were they were not used to and then they were experiencing that for the first time and...there was not time. There was no time to, you know, just to spend some time and said: "Ok, now this is, how is it going to be and this is what you going to experience once you are there and these are the challenges that you might face when you are there in that particular institution". And also, as a, as the organisation we could, we didn't have that time, we were not given that time, remember that, now that learnership came from, you know, the SETA itself. So the SETA didn't have that time frame they said, they said the time for us didn't allow us the time to say: "Ok now, we'll give you some time to, just to prep your learners and all this stuff", but they had their specific time frame. As much as the government is more understanding and all that stuff, but now i think they need to come closer, to experience with us what we experienced because now it's very, you know it's very easy for someone to make a judgement and say: "Oh ok, so now if you've got people with intellectual disability, ok i'll give you extra 10 minutes", it doesn't work like that, it really doesn't work like that. And they can, they do have the ability to learn, they do have the ability...it takes some time and what people don't have is time. [pause while UCT researcher takes a note].


Selection: (6461-6461)

## Appendix G: Example of transcription with codes named

<p>Participant 4: ...va so I think... I think one needs to consider the level at which these learners are before you ...umm... I almost want to say it's ok if funding is there yes funding must be used but you can't just you know grab any ... any tom and hary and say ok here's a learnership here and now you know umm you need to you need to kind of like assess who is ... umm on that level for that particular for that particular umm learnership ... so umm... I think yes the learnership was good but I'm sure these learners learned so many things through it but I think at the same time to avoid so many challenges one needs to place them on the one the correct level and I think for me ummm my experience was that some of them where not all on the same level ... ummm ... yes they where intellectually challenged but some are more advanced than others ... umm ... so ... vaa ... and and when you look at ABET level one and you look at so ABET level one would be something where you ... you know where somebody starts to learn how to read... umm... and then NTF level one you expect that person to be on that ... on that platform already... so umm... I think for people who can't read and write ... it's a high jump...]</p>	<p><b>Comment [11]:</b> Codes (6675-7115) Perceptions and attitudes Correct pitching is needed The learnership level should match their abilities</p>
<p>UCT Researcher: so so your your perception is that the learnership within the context of people with intellectual disability is good when they are at least able to meet minimum standards for being able to engage with that level so for example reading and writing umm so if they can read and write they you feel then they would be able to cope with the learnership at an NQF level one maybe</p>	<p><b>Comment [12]:</b> Codes (7115-7214) Perceptions and attitudes Correct pitching is needed Perceptions and attitudes Access to accredited training is good The learnership level should match their abilities</p>
<p>Participant 4: va umm I think... I think there is a fine line actually there also because yes they are intellectually disabled but umm... you know also giving them something that ... ummm ... is to far-fetched ... it makes it more difficult for them ... you know... ummm ... some of them for example... va they were maybe new into the into the ummm... they they ju they for example just started with you know with the broader group and others where with cape mental health maybe for a long time you know umm and and those who were longer with cape mental health for example you know I'm sure they've gone through other skills and interaction with other people and so on and so on and now somebody who comes in just now and you know it I think it it also sits with somebody emotionally as well you know and and integrating and so on ... soo ummm ... va...]</p>	<p><b>Comment [13]:</b> Codes (7214-7324) Perceptions and attitudes Correct pitching is needed The learnership level should match their abilities</p> <p><b>Comment [14]:</b> Codes (7328-7794) Cognitive limitations of learners Challenges Learner levels of functioning were different</p> <p><b>Comment [15]:</b> Codes (7807-7876) Low learner literacy and numeracy Challenges</p> <p><b>Comment [16]:</b> Codes (8403-8514) The learnership level should match their abilities</p>
<p>UCT Researcher: ok, so where there some peop- learners that you feel was appropriate for this</p>	<p><b>Comment [17]:</b> Codes (8538-9124) Challenges Diverse learner backgrounds</p>




## Appendix H: Example of codes identified



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**Codes**

- Challenges
  - Abstract curriculum
  - Allowed to adjust theory, not practical assessm...
  - Alot of reading material, no visuals
  - Co-facilitator's frustration
  - Cognitive limitations of learners
  - Complexity of curriculum
  - Complexity of some work placement tasks
  - Could not adapt final assessment for learners
  - Could not demonstrate during assessment
  - Could not use visuals for assessments
  - Different terminology used in assessment quest...
  - Difficult assignments
  - Difficult to adapt numeracy and literacy questio...
  - Diverse learner backgrounds
  - Emotional learners
  - Equipment misuse at first



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**Codes**

- Challenges
- Curriculum differentiation strategies
  - Activities to reinforce learning
  - Adapt assessment questions
  - Adapt training materials
  - Advocate for learners at work placements
  - Alternating practical activities and theory
  - Alternative demonstration of knowledge
  - Asking for learner feedback to gauge understand...
  - Assess each learner separately
  - Boardroom classroom set-up
  - Borrow time from subject for another
  - Break down modules into smaller units of learni...
  - Check in on learners every morning
  - Communicate with and support colleagues
  - Create separate areas for learning and break ti...
  - Debrief with co-facilitating

**Codes**

- Challenges
- Curriculum differentiation strategies
- Perceptions and attitudes
  - Access to accredited training is good
  - Belief of connection
  - Continued learning
  - Correct pitching is needed
  - Disempowered
  - Empathy with learners when they are struggling
  - Enjoyable
  - Facilitator confidence that they will understand
  - Fear
  - Frustration
  - I compromised to get it done
  - I felt responsible for them
  - I had to do the dirty work
  - I was just observing and supporting at first

**Codes**

- Challenges
- Curriculum differentiation strategies
- Perceptions and attitudes
- Support
  - Acknowledgement from senior management
  - Clients and their family members
  - Colleagues
  - Enthusiastic and engaged learners
  - Faith
  - Family members
  - Logistical support from employer
  - Placement of job coach as co-facilitator
  - Practical components
  - Promotion after learnership
  - Resources
  - Spouse
  - Supervisor/Manager

## Appendix I: Inclusive education guidelines

### Guidelines for inclusive education of persons with intellectual disability in post- school learnerships

The following are UDL strategies that learning facilitators found important to use when teaching adults with intellectual disability in these learnerships:

<u>Principles</u> Provide multiple means of:	<u>Learning facilitator strategies</u>
<u>Representation</u>	<p><u>Guideline 1:</u> Provide options for perception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Verbal input is better than written</li> <li>→ Use visuals – the actual items and pictures</li> <li>→ Use of flipcharts and white boards to write and draw on</li> <li>→ Use activities and roleplay to reinforce learning and involve the learners</li> </ul> <p><u>Guideline 2:</u> Provide options for language and symbols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Use of learners’ mother tongue</li> <li>→ Simplify curriculum and instruction</li> </ul> <p><u>Guideline 3:</u> Provide options for comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Use concrete examples and practical demonstrations</li> <li>→ Summarise the key outcomes of the curriculum to focus on</li> <li>→ Use different ways for learners to understand assessment questions: multiple choice questions, prompting and rephrasing</li> <li>→ Provide and teach the learners compensation techniques</li> <li>→ Provide homework and review it the next day as a revision</li> <li>→ Explain concepts thoroughly and use repetition</li> </ul>

<p><b><u>Action and expression</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Guideline 4:</u></b> Provide options for physical action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Adapt the ways in which the learners need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in assessments: verbatim scribing, use of laptop</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Guideline 5:</u></b> Provide options for expression and communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Adapt the ways in which the learners need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in assessments: observe them practically, use of pictures</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Guideline 6:</u></b> Provide options for executive functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Set goals with the learners in the beginning to use as a motivation</li> <li>→ Use spot tests to gauge their understanding</li> <li>→ Provide and teach the learners compensation techniques</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Engagement</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Guideline 7:</u></b> Provide options for recruiting interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Create a tension free environment that is personalised to the learners</li> <li>→ Encourage interaction between learners</li> <li>→ Encourage participation and feedback from learners and listen to them</li> <li>→ Keep positive, using humour and make the lessons fun</li> <li>→ Be transparent and prepare the learners for what is going to happen</li> <li>→ Provide regular breaks</li> <li>→ Teach more challenging lessons in the afternoons vs in the mornings</li> <li>→ Shorten the daily teaching programme and lessons</li> <li>→ Alternate activities with theory lessons</li> <li>→ Get to know your learners and build a relationship with them</li> <li>→ Encourage mutual respect and trust</li> <li>→ Be patient and show confidence</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Guideline 8:</u></b> Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Place the learners into smaller groups so the learners could support one another and place stronger learners with others that needed more support so they could assist them</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Guideline 9:</u></b> Provide options for self-regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Use parents as a support</li> <li>→ Use job coaches as supports in the classroom</li> <li>→ Provide support, motivation and guidance at all times</li> </ul>